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Talks with Shaivācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo

(English translation of interviews in Hindi and Kashmiri)

Revealed by

SHAIVACARYA SWAMI LAKSHMANJOO

Ishwar Ashram Trust

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ISHWAR ASHRAM TRUST

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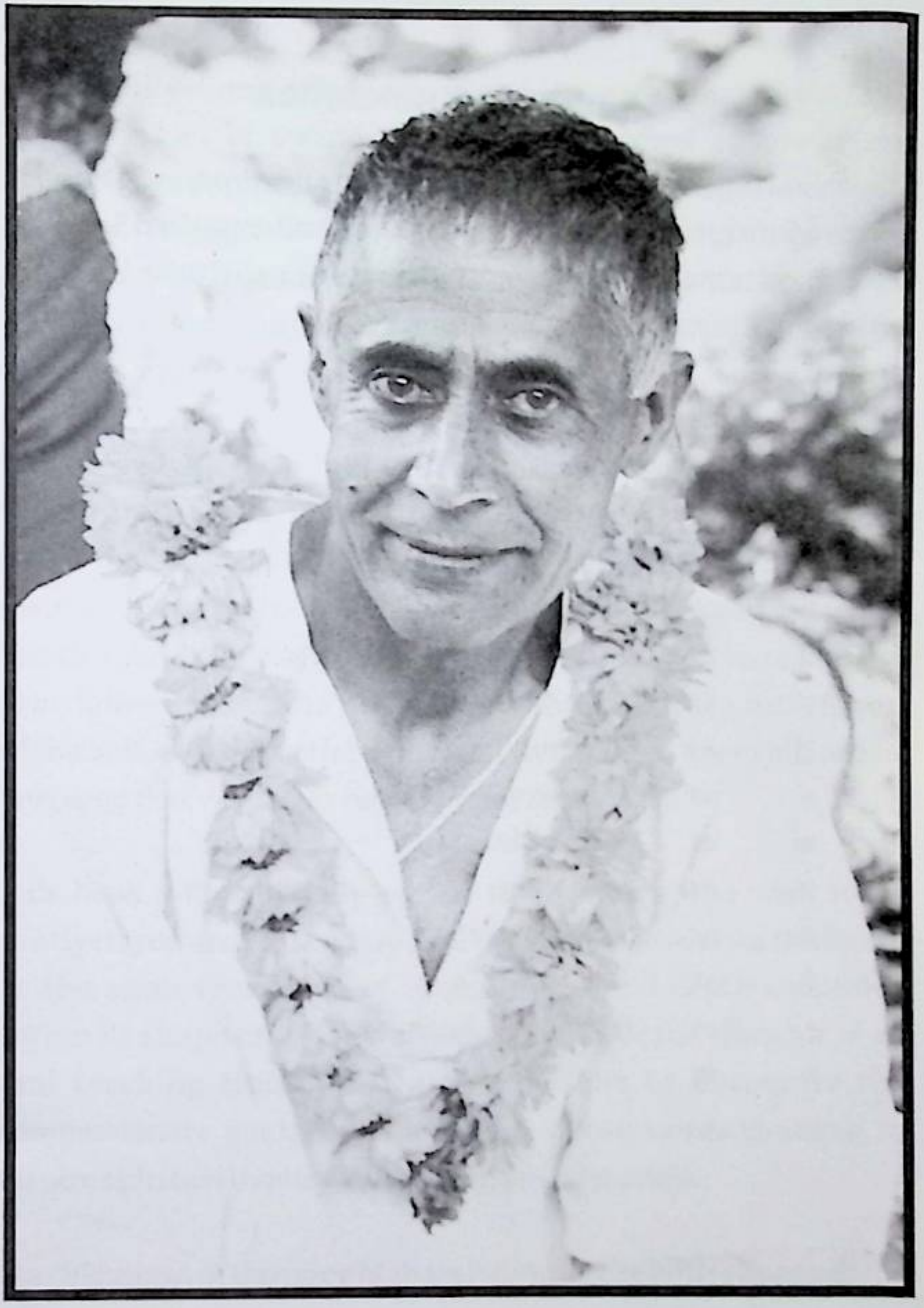

Gurudev Maharaj
Shaivācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo

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Guide to Pronunciation

The following English words exemplify the pronunciation of selected Saṅskṛit vowels and consonants. The Romanized Saṅskṛit vowel or consonant is first listed and then an English word is given to aid you in its proper pronunciation.

a	as	a in *A*merica.
ā	as	a in f*a*ther.
i	as	i in f*i*ll, l*i*ly.
ī	as	i in pol*i*ce.
u	as	u in f*u*ll.
ū	as	u in r*u*de.
ṛi	as	ri in merr*i*ly.
ṛī	as	ri in mar*i*ne.
e	as	e in pr*e*y.
ai	as	ai in *ai*sle.
o	as	o in st*o*ne.
au	as	ou in h*ou*se
ś	as	s in s*u*re.
ṣ	as	sh in *sh*un, bu*sh*
s	as	s in *s*aint, *s*un

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Preface

This small volume offers a rare and intimate glimpse into the living wisdom of Swami Lakshmanjoo, revered as one of the foremost exponents of Kashmir Shaivism in the twentieth century. Presented here are two illuminating interviews conducted by eminent scholars—originally in Kashmiri and Hindi—now carefully translated into English for the benefit of devotees and seekers worldwide.

The conversations unfold with remarkable clarity and warmth. Through simple yet penetrating questions, profound philosophical insights are expressed in an accessible and direct manner. Swamiji's responses reflect not only scriptural mastery but also the authority of lived realization. Complex metaphysical principles—such as the nature of consciousness, the recognition of the Self, and the path to spiritual awakening—are explained in language that welcomes rather than overwhelms.

This book will especially appeal to beginners who wish to be gently introduced to the essential teachings of the Trika tradition. At the same time, earnest students will find depth concealed within its simplicity. These dialogues preserve the vibrancy of an oral teaching tradition, allowing readers to encounter the compassionate guidance of a master whose words continue to inspire spiritual inquiry and inner transformation.

May blessings of Gurudev Maharaj shine on the entire humanity!

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Interview - 1

Interview in Hindi done by a team of scholars from Radio Kashmir (1972) (English Translation of the Interview)

In order to understand the nuances of Shaivism from Shaivācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo and to propagate it among the masses, Radio Kashmir Srinagar organized a conversation with the great Shaiva Master at his ashram located at Ishber Nishat Srinagar. The year was 1972. The sponsor was the Director of the centre at that time, Shri K.K. Nayyar. He had with him two scholars of Shaivism, Prof Neelkanth Gurtu and Prof. Makhanlal Kokiloo.

Names indicated in the book
SWAMIJI: Shaivācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo
Shri K. K. Nayyar = **K.K.N**
Prof. Neelkanth Gurtu = **N.G**
Prof. Makhanlal Kokiloo = **M.K**

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K.K.N: We hear that Swami Rāmji was a Siddha[1] from birth, I have read this somewhere. So can this be said about you too?

SWAMIJI: Who, our Paramaguru (grand master)?

K.K.N: Yes. So can this be said about you as well or not?

SWAMIJI: I cannot say that I am a Siddha by birth or I have become a Siddha or I am trying to become a Siddha.

K.K.N: So when did you start the journey to the destination you have reached now? When did you set foot on this path?

SWAMIJI: I was six years old when I took this path and I took initiation from my brother [Shri Maheshwar Nath Raina]. Then he took me to Swami Rāmji and there I received his blessings.

K.K.N: So when you were six years old, how did you feel that you should follow this path? Six years is a very young and tender age.

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1. Siddha (Sanskrit: सिद्ध) means "accomplished," "perfected," or "one who has attained realization."

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SWAMIJI: I don't know how I got interested in it. Perhaps it was the *saṁskāras* (impressions) of my previous life. I cannot even say what all I experienced in those days because I was absolutely unconscious.

K.K.N: So when you talk about *saṁskāras,* then childhood is not a very important thing, those *saṁskāras* are very important.

SWAMIJI: Yes, that is true. It is also said

(01:56)

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥६-४७॥

"Anekajanmasaṁsiddhastato yāti parāṁ gatim" ||6.47||

In the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita (6.47), Lord Krishna says:

"Aneka janma saṁsiddha, that is, after attaining perfection in many births, the seeker attains salvation. It is not a matter of one birth." *Aneka janma saṁsiddha* means, this work has to be done in many births, this journey is very long.

K.K.N: These are *saṁskāras*?

SWAMIJI: Yes, it is the *saṁskāras* that take us from one birth to the next, from the second birth to the third birth. It is the *saṁskāras* that push us ahead.

K.K.N: Do they have any relation with the soul?

SWAMIJI: They are related to the soul.

K.K.N: Not with the body?

SWAMIJI: No, not with the body. It is with the *puryāṣṭaka*[2]. That is, it consists of the five *tanmātras,* mind, intellect and ego.

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2. *Puryāṣṭaka* is the eight-fold subtle body that we carry from one birth to the next. It is made up of the five *tanmātras: śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha,* along with the three *antarkaraṇas* – mind, ego and intellect. (Editor's note)

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K.K.N: Yes.

SWAMIJI: Mind, intellect, ego and the five *jñānendriyas* (organs of knowledge), these eight live together with the living being and they are the ones that push it, the entire *saṁskāras.*

K.K.N: What happened after that, when you took initiation?

SWAMIJI: I just got lost in it.[3] After that I had no attachment towards the world.

K.K.N: When you came on this path, you took initiation, accepted this. You left the rest of the things . . . then what?

SWAMIJI: I enjoyed it [meditation] a lot. I enjoyed it to a great extent.

K.K.N: What did you do in the morning and evening?

SWAMIJI: I used to just sit in this. Not only in the morning and evening, I used to sit in this during the day as well. Especially, I ed to sit in this during mealtime.

K.K.N: I would like to ask you one more thing, that in this haivism of Kashmir, this considers only one God?

SWAMIJI: This is non-dualism.

K.K.N: Yes. So when truth is one, then the form of truth should also be one. People across the world find so many forms of truth in different religions, different beliefs. If a scientist explains it to us, he says that the colour of light is one but when it passes through the prism, the light takes on many colours, but the accomplished people, the knowledgeable people, who have seen the pure form of that light, they will describe only one form.

SWAMIJI: He [God] is one form – one form only! Those who have described it have spoiled it. This is actually the non-dual

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3. At the time of his childhood Swamiji would describe the meditation experience as "*Badhi Bodh*" – literally "Bigger than the Biggest!"

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form only, but those who describe it have started doing so in a different way. They are responsible for this.

But this is not the case in Shaivism. Shaivism has clearly explained what this *Advaita* path really is. Actually, the *Advaita* path is meant for everyone. It is not a special religion that only Brahmins can learn and no one else. Actually it is meant for everybody. This Advaita [non-dual] path is for anyone who is born in this world. Because it is information from God, who has created everybody, who has created all castes.

K.K.N: So this means that those who told it...

SWAMIJI: Those who told it, have made some mistake in describing it.

K.K.N: You would like to say that, people who have seen the pure form of light have added stories to it, because there is one eye-witness account and one is fiction. So, is there fiction in this?

SWAMIJI: Yes, fiction came and those stories were added to it and so these errors crept in.

K.K.N: I have also read that God cannot be described. So if God cannot be described, how can we explain it to people who have heard the name of God but have not experienced it properly?

SWAMIJI: By initiation. A Guru, a Siddha-guru can explain this only through initiation, not through words. A book has been written, its title is "Zen Flesh, Zen Bones".[4]

It is written in that book that, the flesh of the soul can be described in books; the bones can be described in words, but not

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4. Paul Reps met Swami Lakshmanjoo in Kashmir.He became deeply influenced by Lakshmanjoo's teachings on non-dual Shaivism. Zen Flesh, Zen Bones— by Paul Reps is a classic 1957 collection that introduced many Western readers to Zen teachings. Chapter 4 in the book is "Centering". This chapter was based on Swamiji's discourses to Paul Reps. *(Editor's note)*

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the marrow. The marrow can only be experienced in silence. It is not a subject of books. It is a subject of experience. So, through experience, a Guru can explain to his disciple. If experience is not there, then he will only be a Śāstravit.[5]

There is a story in the Vedas that Sage Narad came to Sanat Kumara to learn. Sanat Kumara asked him, "First tell me what all have you read"? Sage Narad took the names of all the scriptures and said:-

(07:37)

यत्किञ्चित् पृथिव्यां तत् मयाधीतम् ।

"yatkiñcit pṛthivyāṁ tat mayādhītam"/

"I have studied every text on earth . . . I have read all the books in the world."

Then Sanat Kumara replied:

शब्दवित्त् एवासि नार्थवित् ।

"śabdavitt evāsi nārthavit"/

"You're a word knower, not a semantic knower. You have learnt the words but have not understood their meaning. You will have to read them again".

Therefore, this is a matter of experience; it is something that cannot be expressed in words.

K.K.N: But as far as initiation is concerned, Swamiji, there are sixty seven, sixty eight crore[6] people in our country. How many people will take initiation? They also have the right to know God?

SWAMIJI: Everyone has this right.

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5. One who knows scriptures
6. One crore is 10 million.

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K.K.N: So where should they go?

SWAMIJI: Who else but an experienced Guru.

K.K.N: So that identification is also not easy. Nowadays, if you look at the whole country, you look at the newspapers, look at the magazines, there are many gurus, but all of them will be like what you are saying, so it is very difficult to say this?

SWAMIJI: God's grace is also needed in this. If you get God's grace, you will find a Sadguru (realized teacher).

K.K.N: Swamiji, there are seven traditions, why is only Trika famous among the people?

SWAMIJI: (You mean) the seven paths of Shaivism: Shaiva, Vama, Dakshina, Kaula, Mata and Trika etc.? These are not different practices; it is one and the same system. These are steps to go and reach to the point of Trika. These are not different practices.[7]

Trika is a three-fold science – advaita, dvaitādvaita and dvaita[8] - all three are included in in Shaivism. This is also the cycle of Objective Consciousness, Cognitive-Consciousness and

---

7. In Shaivism—especially within the Kashmir Shaiva-Tantric tradition—the "seven paths" are best understood as graded approaches to realization rather than rigid sects: beginning with the Shaiva mārga, which emphasizes ritual worship and devotion to Shiva as separate from the practitioner; moving through Dakṣiṇa mārga, a restrained, symbolic form of Tantra, and Vāma mārga, which uses transgressive or antinomian practices to dissolve fear and duality; deepening into Kaula mārga, where the body and lived experience are embraced as the site of liberation; unfolding through Mata/Krama, which focuses on the sequential absorption of consciousness and Shakti's dynamic power; and culminating in Trika, the non-dual synthesis that teaches recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) of one's own identity with Shiva—sometimes extended to Anuttara, the supreme, effortless path where realization occurs through direct recognition alone, beyond method, ritual, or stages. (Editor's note)
8. That is – monistic, mono-dualistic, and dualistic – respectively.

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Subjective-Consciousness. Nara, Śakti and Śiva are its synonyms. That is why this scripture is called Trika Śāstra.

[Shaivism] has three branches - Dvaita branch, Advaita branch and Dvaitādvaita branch.

The Dvaita branch contains ten Tantras, the Dvaitādvaita Śāstra contains eighteen Tantras, and the Advaita Śāstra contains sixty-four Tantras.

But why is Advaita Śāstra called Trika Śāstra?

Because Advaita Śāstra also includes Dvaita Śāstra and Dvaitadvaita Śāstra. It also includes duality and Advaita Śāstra. In this way, all the ninety-two tantras are included in Advaita Śāstra. That is why Advaita Śāstra or Bhairava Śāstra is called Trika Śāstra. The Trika Śāstra, which is the Advaita process [Shaivism], has duality, duality-cum-nonduality, and non-duality. All three are included in it. That is why it is called Trika Śāstra.

N.G: What is the relation between Tantra and Trika? Is Tantra itself called Trika or is Trika something different?

SWAMIJI: No. Bhairava Tantras are called Trika. Tantras are divided into three sections. The tantras are dualistic tantras which are called Śiva Tantra and the others are Rudra Tantras or Dvaitādvaita Tantra. Advaita Tantras are called Bhairava Tantra. All these other tantras are also included in Bhairava Tantras. That is why Bhairava Tantra is called 'Trika'.

N.G: If we call Bhairava Tantra as Trika, then is it correct to call it Kashmir Śaiva Darshan or will it be correct to call it Trika.

SWAMIJI: No, there is no difference between Śaiva Śāstra and Trika Śāstra.

N.G: There is no difference?

SWAMIJI: There is no difference because whether you consider it as Śiva, Rudra or Bhairava, it is the same name. If we name it in

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dualistic form then it will be Śiva, if we name it in Dvaitādvaita form then it will be called Rudra, if we name it in non- dualistic form then it will be Bhairava. This Śiva Śāstra is the Trika Śāstra. And why is this Trika Śāstra considered as Kashmir Shaiva Śāstra?

We call this Kashmir Shaivism, don't we?

N.G: Yes, we do.

SWAMIJI: From the philosophical point of view, when Kālīyuga arrived, the Trika Śāstra was completely missing. Then on Mount Kailas Lord Śankara (Śiva) assumed the incarnation of Śrīkanth Nāth and invited Durvasa Rishi and ordered him to preach these Tantras (this Trika Śāstra) again. He (Rishi Durvasa) produced three mind born sons, one of whom belonged to the sect of Dvaita Śāstra, one to the sect of Dvaitādvaita Śāstra and one to the sect of Advaita Śāstra.

And he created those three sons with the force of mind. They were born by resolve and he incorporated Shaiva scriptures into them. Trika Śāstra was taught to Tryambakanāth. Āmardaka and Śrīnāth, who were the two other sons. The other sons were taught the Dvaita Śāstra and Dvaitādvaita Śāstra respectively. The tradition of mind born sons (manas putras) continued for a long time in the sect of the Trayambaka branch. They used to create mind born sons and kept giving initiation to them. The mind born sons became identical to their creators.

They would be like that.

दीपात्दीपं इवोदितम् ।

"dīpātdīpaṁ ivoditam"/

"As one lamp lights a second lamp, there is no deficiency or shortage in the second one. The master and the disciple remain

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the same."[9]

That is how this sect went on.

Beyond the fifteenth generation there was a Siddha named Saṅgamāditya. He tried hard to beget a son mentally but was unsuccessful. He could not do it. So while traveling he came to Kashmir. He saw a girl in Kashmir and went to her father and asked for his daughter in marriage. The father consented and Saṅgamāditya married. Then this sect spread in Kashmir, and that is why from then on it was named Kashmir Śaiva Darśan.

Then, during the rule of Lalitāditya, there was the Sage, Atrigupta in Antarvedi. Antarvedi is a track of land which is between Yamuna and Ganga. Ācārya Atrigupta lived there. He was also a scholar of Shaiva Śāstra, but Shaivism could not spread there. Fortunately King Lalitaditya, who ruled Kashmir in those days, went there, met him and invited him to Kashmir. In this way through his tradition Kashmir Śaiva Darśan got established here. And because of this it was named Kashmir Śaiva Darśan.

K.K.N: Swamiji, what does Paramaśiva mean?

SWAMIJI: Do you want to understand the difference between Shiva and Paramaśiva?

K.K.N: Yes. Who is called Shiva and who is called Paramaśiva?

SWAMIJI: Shiva is also like Paramaśiva. There is no real difference between Shiva and Paramaśiva. Shiva is concerned [with creation]. Paramaśiva is above that. That means Paramaśiva is concerned as well as above.

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9. *"Dīpāt,* when one candle is lighted by another candle the differentiation between two candles do not remain: "that it is inferior and it is superior; this was master and this is disciple." Candles are two, same; in same way they shine. In the same way, disciple and master shines." Swami Lakshmanjoo, Tantrāloka 2, verse 40, commentary. Swamiji says this is how initiation works in *anupāya.*

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K.K.N: Does Paramaśiva mean Nirguṇa, Nirākāra, Omnipresent Being?

SWAMIJI: No. His characteristics are not that he is formless (nirguṇa), attribute-less (nirākāra), and omnipresent. His characteristics are cit, ānanda, īccha, jñana and kriyā (consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge and action). Wherever this completeness is achieved, that is Paramaśiva.

K.K.N: The unmanifested existence – formless and attribute-less – it will have the power to act . . . the seed is there. The unmanifested does have the power to manifest.

(16:35)

SWAMIJI: Expressed in the unexpressed.

अन्तः स्थितवतामेव घटते बहिरात्मना ॥

"antaḥ sthitavatāmeva ghaṭate bahirātmanā"//[10]

This whole world remains in the unmanifested state. Even during the great deluge, it remains in the unmanifested state. It has not gone anywhere. This world exists there.

"मयूराण्डरसवत् अभिन्नरूपतया"

mayurāṇḍarasavat abhinnarūpatayā[11]

But like the plasma in a peacock's egg, just as different types of

---

10. This verse appears in the commentaries of various Shaiva text: Tantrāloka 5.14a, (quoted from the Ratnaprabhā); Īśvarapratyabhijñā-vimarśinī, Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛti-vimarśinī, and Parātriśikā Vivaraṇa. Literal translation: "Only for those that are situated internally does [manifestation] occur in an external form . . . [It] occurs with an external nature only for those abiding within." *(Editor's note)*
11. *"Mayurāṇḍarasanyāyena parā,"* from Paratrishika Vivarana verse 9a. "Like the juice of a peacock's egg, in an undivided form." *(Editor's note)*

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colors are integrally contained in that juice, so it remains there by its Shiva-likeness. And in this, there is sometimes antarāta (internal-hidden), sometimes grāhyata and sometimes bahyatā, i.e., in antara daśa is paramaśiva rūpatā, in grahita is śakti rūpatā, and in bahyatā is viśva rūpatā (the universe).[12]

K.K.N: Swamiji, I feel that many people here misunderstand that Paramaśiva is Lord Shankara. Can this Paramaśiva become Lord Krishna as well? Paramaśiva can become anything . . . he can become anything?

SWAMIJI: Paramaśiva can even be attributed to any human being.

K.K.N: Right?

SWAMIJI: Because there is no one other than Paramaśiva, everything is included in Paramaśiva.

K.K.N: This is a matter of experience. This can only be known hrough experience.

SWAMIJI: No, it is also said in the scriptures: (17.50)

प्रदेशो ब्रह्मणः सार्वरूप्यमनतिक्रान्तश्चाविकल्प्यश्च ।

"pradeśo brahmaṇaḥ sārvarūpyamanatikrāntaścāvikalpyaśca/"[13]

(Tantrāloka 1.165 commentary)

Not even a single straw is outside the omnipresence of Param

12. *"Antarāta* is utmost internal place, *grahyāta* is in *saṁkalpa* (impressions), and *bahyāta* is in the outside world." Swamiji — Tantrāloka 10.37 commentary.

13. *"Pradeśas* means the space of [any object], like a 'Kangri' (fire pot), a microphone, a book, a table, these mattress, or the space of this sheet – all these are nominated as *pradeśa.* And all the spaces of each and every object in this world is not excluded from this fullness of God consciousness. Everywhere, in each and every space and form the fullness of God consciousness is shining. So this limitedness is only there for the time being – limitedness is not real." Swami Lakshmanjoo. Abhinavagupta's Bhagavad Gītā Saṁgraha (1978), chapter 15, verse 7 commentary.

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Brahma. It cannot exist without omnipresence. He is only one. Consider him to be Krishna, Shankar, Ram, Shiva, Rahim, Christ, he is only one. Or consider him to be the limited knower, consider him to be the living being, he is also Param Shiva.

K.K.N: Swamiji, then where does the existence of the perceptible world go?

Does the perceptible world get included in Śiva-bhāva or not?

SWAMIJI: No, this is the āntarata, grahyata and bahyata of śiva-bhāva. When he places śiva-bhāva in the internal state, there is āntarata. When he brings his own śiva-bhāva to grahya state, he places it in in the grahyaroopta. And when he places the same śiva-bhāva in bahya roopta in the world, he becomes Shiva there also.

(18:37)

आश्यानं चिद्रसस्यौघं साकारत्वमुपागतम् ।
जगद्रूपतया वन्दे प्रत्यक्षं भैरवं वपुः ॥

"āśyānaṁ cidrasasyaughaṁ sākāratvamupāgatam /
jagadrūpatayā vande pratyakṣaṁ bhairavaṁ vapuḥ //"[14]

"I offer my obeisances to that form of the universe which is the source of all tastes and which has become manifest in the form of the universe."

This is a shloka by Ācārya Abhinavagupta. Ācārya

14. "Some devotee has explained in this śloka, that, this is the coagulation of cid rasa, the fluid of God consciousness; and the ānanda of God consciousness, which has been coagulated and created space and time. So, this whole universe is only the existence of God consciousness nothing else. I bow to that universe – I don't bow to God consciousness – I bow to that universe which is the expansion of God consciousness, because it is the commentary of God consciousness." Quoted by Swami Lakshmanjoo, in various text of Shaivism.

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Abhinavagupta was a famous Ācārya of Shaiva Shastras. The viscosity of the cidrasa has become the form of the world. That is why I bow to the God who is the visible form of the world. Why should I go to that invisible God?

K.K.N: By viscosity do you mean coagulation?

SWAMIJI: Coagulation – clotting.

K.K.N: Let me take you back to the first point you were making. This started again from the time of Tryambakāditya.[15] So for those of our listeners who don't know, I think it is important to tell them in which century this happened. Saṅgamāditya was also there, in which century did he carry this forward. So that the listeners get to know the connection of time with these events.

SWAMIJI: This took place in the beginning of Kaliyuga. Kaliyuga is now about 5000 years old. Consider Saṅgamāditya, who has come to Kashmir. Saṅgamāditya's next generation was Aruṇāditya. Aruṇāditya's next generation was Anand. Anand's next generation was Somānand. Somānand's next generation was Utpaldeva. Utpaldeva's next generation was Lakshmangupta. Lakshmangupta's next generation was Abhinavagupta. It has been 900 years since Abhinavagupta. From this you can calculate. It is difficult to tell the exact dates.

K.K.N: Dr. Baljinath Pandit has written in his book "Aspects of Kashmir Shaivism" that the period of Tryambakāditya was the end of the third century, after Christ, and the period of Saṅgamāditya was the end of the seventh century, after Christ.

So, should we consider it to be about 1600 years or more like 1700?

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15. NOTE: Tryambhakanātha was the first mind born son of Durvasa Rishi. Tryambakāditya was subsequent lineage which continued for fifteen generations. *(Editor's note)*

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SWAMIJI: To whom?

K.K.N: Trayambakāditya 1700 and Saṅgamāditya about 1300 years?

SWAMIJI: No, it is not possible. Look, Tryambakāditya was ages ago. Tryambakāditya is an Adi Guru. He would be there at least 5000 years ago, at the beginning of Kālīyuga.

(21.34)

K.K.N: Please do me one more favour. Those of our listeners, including myself, who do not know what Trika is. So please explain what Trika is.

SWAMIJI: Trika is everything. Trika has pervaded everything. This is three-fold. We too are situated in the three-fold cycle. Everything is three-fold. Whatever is there is Trika. It is three-fold. There is one Vedya, one Vedana and one Vedaka.[16] There is wakefulness, there is dream, there is deep sleep. There is creation, there is existence, there is destruction. There is Bhuh, there is Bhuvah, and there is Svah – there are three worlds.[17]

This triputi form, this whole is called Trika. Putting these Trikas in one bhāva is called Trika Shāstra.

K.K.N: While talking about a question, you said Shiva, Shakti and Man. What is their relationship with each other?

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16. In Trika (Kashmir Shaiva) philosophy, vedya (the object known), vedanā (the act of knowing), and vedaka (the knower) appear as three only at the level of experience. In reality, they are one indivisible consciousness (cit). Liberation is the recognition that the knower, knowing, and known are always one. *(Editor's note)*
17. Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, and Svaḥ are the three primary lokas (planes of existence) in Vedic thought. Bhūḥ represents the physical and material world, Bhúvaḥ the subtle realm of life-force and mind, and Svaḥ the luminous realm of higher consciousness and insight. Together, they describe a graded cosmos from gross matter to refined awareness, all sustained by the same underlying reality. (Editor's note)

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SWAMIJI: This is the flow of Shiva. The Trika is the flow of Shiva. This is the external flow. This is the order of descent. This order is called descending order (Avaroha Krama)

In the descending order there is the world. In the ascending order (Aaroha Krama) there is salvation.

When Shiva adopts the descending order, then he becomes worldly.

When Shiva adopts the ascending order, then he becomes liberated.

When he descends from Shiva bhāva, he descends through Shakti and reaches the state of human. In the human state, he keeps struggling, keeps suffering, then again he winds up this leela, 'this drama', then from the human form he goes to the Shiva form via Shakti form, i.e., he becomes liberated.

K.K.N: You talked about Avaroha and Āroha.

SWAMIJI: Climbing down and climbing up

K.K.N: Yes

SWAMIJI: This leela (drama) can be meaningful only when the āroha leela (ascending) is easy along with the āvaroha leela (descending). When one descends but does not know how to ascend, that is not a leela. That is samsara When one descends and ascends, that is a leela. When one descends and cannot ascend, that is a samsara. This is the difference. This is the difference between the living being and the realized soul. The one who is knowledgeable knows how to descend as well as ascend.

K.K.N: State of freedom

SWAMIJI: Yes. This is Shaivism.

K.K.N: State of freedom and a little play in leela. In leela, why is this nature of playing, frolic, mischief, the nature of Shiva?

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SWAMIJI:

(24:18)

स्वयं बध्नाति देवेशः स्वयं चैव विमुञ्चति

svayaṁ badhnāti deveśaḥ svayaṁ caiva vimuñcati //13-123//[18]

That is, Shiva binds himself and frees himself on his own. In reality, he is neither bound nor free. He always remains the same. He creates leela just to bless us. He creates this leela to bless us and to bless the living beings. That is why it is said in Shaiv Śāstra that the Supreme Lord keeps performing five actions – he creates, he sustains, he destroys, he conceals and he bestows his favour.

He produces, it is an act.

He nurtures, this is the second act;

He destroys, this is the third act.

He does nigraha, he punishes, that comes in category of samhara.

He does anugraha, that also comes in category of samhara.

There are three types of samhara (destruction).

(25.36)

General (samanya) destruction, destruction in the form of restraint (nigraha) and destruction in the form of grace (anugraha). Only three acts were used in this too.

Even after performing three acts he is still doing anugraha only.

He creates the world in order to bless (do anugraha) the world. He nurtures the world, but his intention is not to nurture it, his intention is to bless it. He dematerialises the world, controls the world just to grant grace. It means just to elevate. Elevate the

18. "This Lord of Lords binds himself with his own free will, and liberates himself with his own free will." Tantrāloka 13.123.

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whole universe. It is his intent to elevate the one who is settled in its inner being. Because the living beings and the group of living beings are infinite, unfathomable and limitless. He blesses them, uplifts them, keeps elevating them. This is HIS job. That is why HE keeps creating this play (leela).

K.K.N: Those who don't know the āroha.

SWAMIJI: To explain to them, the descending leela and the ascending leela should become a form of leela, it should not be difficult or a painful thing. One who descends, he just descends comfortably, and then if he cannot ascend he starts crying, "How will I ascend, what happened to me, I am dead, I am finished!" This is not the case. One should know how to descend and also how to ascend, then he becomes with leela.

K.K.N: So what should be done to know the āroha?

SWAMIJI: (laughing) One should go to the Guru. One should receive initiation, follow it and follows the niyama.

Should do. Whats else?

K.K.N: What are the niyamas?

SWAMIJI: niyamas?

These niyamas have been marked in Shaiva scriptures[19] in the context of time. How to get up. Discipline, etiquette. Going to the Guru. Sitting near the Guru. Talking to the Guru, there should be politeness in it. This is niyama. There should be order. Not rudely like - "No, tell me!"

Like King Janak said to Aṣṭavakra - "You liberate me right now, I am giving you two minutes, just liberate me in two minutes." This is not a niyama. Such a sequence should not be there in the Guru-

19. The Shaiva rules and regulations are listed by Abhinavagupta in his Tantrāloka, chapter 4, verses 213-278. It should be noted that these rules differ from the rules and regulations (yamas and niyamas) given by Patañjali in his Aṣṭaṅga Yoga. *(Editor's note)*

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disciple order.

K.K.N: He was a king, not a disciple?

SWAMIJI: That is why Aṣṭāvakra wanted to make him his disciple.

Then he said:-

(28:00)

विषयान् विषवत्त्यज

viṣayān viṣvattyaja[20]

Leave this entire subject. That is, this whole topic, (two minutes, three minutes, three minutes, You have just a minute's time), when you let go of this, you will be free."

Arrogance does not work there. There should be discipline, politeness and humility.

K.K.N: Just one rule?

SWAMIJI: That's enough.

K.K.N: Or is there any rule other than this?

SWAMIJI: This is where discipline will come in. When you go to the Guru, the rules are established by the Guru's darshan. Other rules that should be there are also made, they are developed.

K.K.N: Do the Gurus themselves bestow grace on the disciple or does the disciple also have to do something for this?

SWAMIJI: No. There should be a basis too. The disciple's mind should be clean.

(28:50)

दुष्टाधिवासविगमे पुष्पैः कुम्भोऽधिवास्यते ॥२८२॥

20. The exact quote is Aṣṭavakra's reply to King Janaka: *"muktiṁ icchasi cettāta viṣayān viṣavattyaja kṣamārjavadayātoṣasatyaṁ pīyūṣavad bhaja* – if you are seeking liberation, my son, shun the objects of the senses like poison. Practice tolerance, sincerity, compassion, contentment and truthfulness like nectar." Aṣṭavakra Gītā, chapter 1, verse 2. *(Editor's note)*

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द्विगुणोऽस्य स संस्कारो नेत्थं शुद्धे घटे विधिः ।

duṣṭādhivāsavigame puṣpaiḥ kumbho'dhivāsyate // 282 //
dviguṇo'sya sa saṁskāro netthaṁ suddhe ghaṭe vidhiḥ /

TĀ 13.282

There should not be any duṣṭādhivāsa. There should not be any impurity residing there. Like an earthen pot, if there is any impurity inside it, if it is filled with some dirt, and if someone wants to put flowers in it, then can you put flowers directly into this? If flowers are put in it, those flowers will also become dirty. Therefore, its saṁskāra, first that dirt has to be removed, then it has to be cleaned, its saṁskāra has to be made, then flowers are put in it and then it can become saṁskrita. Therefore, a disciple with duṣṭādhivāsa should not come to the master. Nothing can happen to him. One should come with pure feelings, with love, with a clean mind. One should not turn the place of heart into a pantry. The heart should be completely clean and active so that his grace(anugraha) can stay there. Did you understand?

K.K.N: Yes.

SWAMIJI: When direct experience is about to happen, it happens by grace, it is received by Guru jñāna. Guru jñāna or Shiva-jñāna.

(30:36)

दर्शनात्स्पर्शनाद्वापि वितृतद्भवसागरात् ।
तारयिष्यन्ति योगीन्द्राः कुलाचारप्रतिष्ठिताः ॥

darśanāt-sparśanādvāpi vitatadbhavasāgarāt/

21. "Those heroes of *yogīs* who are established in *kulācāra* – *Kula* system – they reveal the reality of God consciousness to others by mere *darśana;* mere seeing, looking, or mere touch; and thus, all his disciple cross over on the other side of this *saṁsāra* [cycle] of repeated births and deaths, and they get liberated." Swami Lakshmanjoo, Śiva Śūtra Vimarśinī, 3.28 comm.

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tārayiṣyanti yogīndrāḥ kulācāra-pratiṣṭhitāḥ //[21]

Kulācāra here means Trikācāra. The Yogīndras [heroic yogis] who are established in Trikācāra take their disciples across by sight or touch – they are initiated there. This is diksha for them.

K.K.N: Bhagwan Abhinavagupta once said that those who have attained the knowledge of truth, they get initiation from the goddesses. What does this mean?

SWAMIJI: It means the maintenance of the order of Guru-disciple parampara [lineage],

Fearing that the Guru-disciple tradition may get lost, he has said that when he can have the vision of God without a Guru, then who will become his Guru? Therefore Abhinavagupta has said there, "Davyairbhih" which are the indriya shaktis . Shaiva Śāstras have kept two sections in the senses. One is indriya vrittis and the other is the indriya shaktis. When it assumes the form of indriya vrittis, then they become bahirmukh (outward). When these tendencies assume the form of powers, they are called the indriya shaktis of the yogis. At that time, the indriya , instead of coming in form of vrittis, come in the form of shaktis. These shaktis do the initiation for him.

That is why Abhinavgupta has said somewhere in the commentary of Bhagavadgita-

(32:29)

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः॥४-३४॥

tadviddhi pranipātena paripraśnena sevayā |
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ ||4.34||[22]

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22. This *bhaktya*, attachment, when you have got devotion of that knowledge, that knowledge will come to you. That is [the meaning of] bowing your head before master.

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O Arjuna! It should be understood that tadviddhi pranipātena paripraśnena – By doing pranipāta[23], by asking questions, and by serving. But doing pranipāta is not only bowing, or asking paripraśna, to touch the feet of living beings, to ask questions and to serve, is not praṇām (bowing). It is not only to bow down or to ask paripraśnena (investigation). When you investigate in the indriyas: "What is this thing? Who am I?". Then those , those indriyas only will tell him what his swaroop is. Those senses themselves become his Guru. That is why it is said there "devībhir-dīkṣitaśca"[24] the sense-goddesses have given him initiation, the sense-goddesses themselves became his Guru and the Guru-disciple sequence is maintained.

K.K.N: This Shaiva dharma that is there, is there any place for hakti (devotion) in this?

SWAMIJI: There is actually more emphasis on devotion. If there is no devotion, there will be no yoga, there will be no knowledge. Devotion should be there first.

K.K.N: But some people say that in Shaivism, Samavesha is

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23. Worship one by prostrating

24. *yasya svato'yaṁ sattarkaḥ sarvatraivādhikāravān, abhiṣiktaḥ svasaṁvitti-devībhirdīkṣitaśca saḥ.* That master in whom this *sattarka* – transcendental logic – rises automatically, without being dependent to master or *śāstras, sarvatraivādhikāravān,* he is capable of initiating the whole universe, i.e., he becomes the master of the universe. *Abhiṣiktaḥ svasaṁvitti devībhir dīkṣitaśca saḥ,* but it is said in *śāstras* that without a master nothing can be achieved? How he achieves this without masters and without *śāstras*? For that he says, "his own internal energies of Lord Śiva – *śakti cakra* – they become his masters and they have initiated him. Those *devīs* sprinkle that purifying water on him,, and those *devīs* initiate him internally. So he is absolutely free from the dependence upon masters and *śāstras*.
Swami Lakshmanjoo, Tantrāloka chapter 4, verse 42.

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more respected than devotion, it has a greater place. What is this Samavesha?

SWAMIJI: No, actually complete Samavesha is devotion.

(34:03)

न पादपतनं भक्तिर्व्यापिनि परमात्मनि ।
भक्तिर्भावस्वभावानां तदेकीभावभावनम् ॥

na pādapatanaṁ bhaktirvyāpini paramātmani /
bhaktirbhāvasvabhāvānāṁ tadekībhāvabhāvanam //

Pādapatanam bhakti: na bhakti, pādapatanam, bowing down in front of someone, in front of Guru, in front of God, in front of Prabhu [Lord Śiva], in front of Iśvara is not called bhakti. Bowing down in front of God and then crying, shouting, beating chest in front of him, shedding tears, this is not called bhakti. Because "vyapini paramātmani" God is all-pervading, He is present everywhere.

So what is bhakti in Śaiva Śāstra?

(34:50)

भक्तिर्भावस्वभावानां तदेकीभावभावनम् ॥

bhaktirbhāvasvabhāvānāṁ tadekībhāvabhāvanam //

Devotion is completely destroyed by worshipping only God. Do devotion to all people. Love all people. When you love all the worldly people, you are loving God. This is devotion.

K.K.N: Swamiji, all these people do not know the āroha, the ascension. They will get stuck. How will they move forward?

SWAMIJI: No. This is a matter of understanding. One should not do devotion in an individual form. By doing it individually, one will get attachment. Devotion is universal. It is not that you love only one community and leave the other. You should love universally.

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You should love the universe, as the representation of God.

K.K.N: And dhyana and meditation? Do they have any place?

SWAMIJI: Yes, we do dhyana and meditation but devotion should come first. Dhyana will happen only when there is devotion.

K.K.N: Whose dhyana?

SWAMIJI: The same Universal being who is God. We have to see where he is situated. Because that Universal God is also situated on the Trika path only.

He is in antaratā

He is in grāhyatā

He is in bahyatā

When breath goes out it is bahyatā

When breath goes in it is grāhyatā

When there is junction of prāṇāpāna, it is antaratā

Therefore, since we cannot recognize Him in grāhyatā and bahyatā, because we are not advanced seekers, advanced aspirants, that is why the Guru gives initiation , on the point of antarāta, i.e., to observe, concentrate on that [center]. This is how one does dhyana.

M.K: Swamiji, you told us about Sandhi, so how will you explain to the common people what Sandhi is?

SWAMIJI: Those who are incapable of meditation, for them there is japa. For those who are incapable of doing japa. there is a stotra paath for them. Those who are incapable of doing stotra paath, for them universal works are there. Like digging wells, building dharamshalas, opening schools, hospitals, this also purifies the mind. By purifying the mind, one gets the right to know about the sandhi (junction). After that one can concentrate on that sandhi. So these paths and options are there for common

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people also. But you have to travel.

This is a long journey, Sir! (38.10)

N.G: Yoga Darshan has emphasized on Kriya. In Vedanta and other scriptures, jñāna is considered to be the most important. How can Shaiva Śāstra achieve unity among these? Is the Shaiva Śāstra Yoga predominant or jñāna predominant?

SWAMIJI: This is or jñāna-Yoga predominant. Yoga should be in the form of knowledge (jñāna).

Yoga is not just about meditation and chanting mantras. It also requires knowledge.

Knowledge has an irrefutable connection with Yoga. Where there is knowledge, yoga must be there. And action should also take place there.

N.G: So jñāna is incomplete without kriya and..

SWAMIJI: Jñāna is incomplete without kriya and kriya is incomplete without jñāna.

K.K.N: Swamiji, Gurutu Sahib talked about Kriya Yoga and Jñāna Yoga and after that whatever little I have read, there is Śāmbhava. But there is one thing in which there is no upaya, that is Anupāya. Can anyone go straight to it or will one have to go through three, Kriya, Jñāna, Iccha?

SWAMIJI: Actually only three solutions have been considered.

K.K.N: Yes.

SWAMIJI: Śāmbhavopāya, Śaktopāya and Āṇavopāya. Śāmbhavopāya, which is based on Iccha Shakti, and Śaktopāya is Jñāna Shakti and Āṇavopāya is Kriya Shakti. Where one-pointedness is achieved by Iccha Shakti, Śāmbhavopāya can work. Where one-pointedness, concentration is possible by Jñāna, Śaktopāya is predominant and where one-pointedness comes by Kriya, Āṇavopāya is predominant. That is why ,in the world of

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Āṇavopāya, building roads, digging wells, helping people, all this has been told. Because this also helps in concentration of the mind. These three upayas have been explained in Shaivism. After these three upayas, the Anupāya krama, which you have told, where nothing has to be done.

K.K.N: I have not told you, you have told me. I have learnt it from you, how can I tell you?

SWAMIJI: That Anupāya krama, that is Upeya krama. It will come in Upeya world. It will not come in the world of Upāya. That Upāya will not come in the net. Anupāya is understanding that nothing has to be done. This is only this much Upāya, how much Upāya?

K.K.N: That nothing is to be done.

SWAMIJI: Understanding this very clearly, very well that nothing has to be done. When one starts understanding that nothing has to be done, one reaches the Anupāya stage. There are very few people who reach the Anupāya stage.

(41:05)

पूजकाः शतशः सन्ति भक्ताः सन्ति सहस्रशः ।
प्रसादपात्रमाश्वस्ताः प्रभोर्द्वित्रा न पञ्चषाः ॥25

pūjakāḥ śataśaḥ santi bhaktāḥ santi sahasraśaḥ /
prasādapātramāśvastāḥ prabhordvitrā na pañcaṣāḥ /

We can find millions of worshippers. We can find thousands of devotees. Thousands and millions of devotees can be found. But prasādapātramāśvastāḥ prabhoḥ, those who become the vessels of the Lord's grace, dvitrā santi, two or three will be found in this

25. This verse appears in Jayaratha's commentary of Tantrāloka 3.288. It is quoted by Swamiji as a footnote in his Bhagavad Gītā Saṁgraha, chapter 7, verse 3.

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world. Not even five will be found. Therefore that Anupāya which is, Anupāya in fact it is no upāya (means).

(41.54)

It's written there Anudara kanya.

Like someone says "Anudara Kanya". This girl is Anudara, she does not have a stomach. It does not mean that she does not have a stomach. It means that she eats very little. That is why she is called Anudara Kanya. That is why there is a little solution there. What is the little solution there in Anupāya? The solution in Anupāya is to understand that nothing has to be done, that's it.

K.K.N: But in the present times, Swamiji, you know the world has become very comfort-loving.

SWAMIJI: Does the world want to remain in Anupāya only?

K.K.N: The world wants that there should be some magic so that no Upaya is needed and the work(of realisation) gets done. So till Anupāya, do you think that there is no direct way? So one can reach there only by crossing those three steps?

SWAMIJI: In my opinion, we will have to walk through those steps only.

K.K.N: Can no one go directly?

SWAMIJI: Yes, there is a direct way. There is one direct way. When there is an invitation from above, from the Lord!

K.K.N: So how does that happen?

SWAMIJI: It happens to some people like this, while working, they get an invitation from God, grace of God, he is called back.

K.K.N: They say this in Urdu, Kasr-e-Nafsi - to say your words with humility. The world knows this, you will never say it with your mouth, but I have heard that in Kashmir Shaivism, those who have attained success, attained realisation, they do Śaktipat on those who do not know anything, who do not even know this path

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at all. So is it possible that Śaktipat is done.

SWAMIJI: Laughing, laughing. This can happen?

K.K.N: This can happen?

SWAMIJI: This can happen, there should be God's mercy.

K.K.N: Then I will wait for that time, that moment.

M.K: Lalleshwari, who is very famous here in Kashmir by the name of Lal Ded, has said that:

छांड़ानलूसऽस पननिस पानस छोपिज़्ञानस वोत न कांह
लयकरमस वअचस मै-खानस बअर बअर बानअ तअ चवान न कांह।

tshaanddaan luutshu's paa'nys paanas, Tsheypi Jnaanas vot na kaanh;
lay karmas vatcas mai-khanus, Bari bari baana ta cheyvaan na kaanh /[26]

That is, I searched myself a lot but I could not reach this Nirvikalpa jñāna, I did not understand what Nirvikalpa jñāna is. But when I immersed myself in myself, I reached that bar where there were lots of filled glasses but no one had the strength to drink.

Has She indicated this towards the Anupāya (means)?

SWAMIJI: Yes, she has indicated towards the Anupāya.

(44.53)

N.G: Swamiji, I want to change the topic a little. There are twenty five elements in Sankhya philosophy. Shaiv Śāstra believes in thirty seven elements. What is this Shaiv philosophy's Tattva

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26. This is a quote from Lal Vakh, verse 99. The literal translation is as follows: "Searching for the Self, I wearied myself; For none by searching ever gained. The secret knowledge beyond the mind. I stopped searching, and love led me to the Tavern door. There I found wine jars aplenty, But none desiring to drink from them."
I exhausted myself searching for my own Self, thinking the hidden knowledge was out of reach. But when I dissolved my karma into that nameless abode, I found the vessels overflowing, yet no one was there to drink. *(Editor's note)*

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krama (arrangement of principles) after twenty five elements and what is the secret in it? Why, what is the need for them to go from twenty five to thirty seven?

SWAMIJI: The intent of Shaivācāryas is to explain to us that the samsara does not end only at the Puruṣa tattva. In Sankhya Darshan and Vedanta Darshan or Yoga Darshan, they have proved that if a being reaches the Puruṣa-tattva, he is liberated. But even after reaching the Puruṣa tattva, there is no hope of liberation.

To clarify this, the Shaiva Śāstras have taken more elements beyond the Puruṣa tattva, to explain the elements that are beyond it, which are in the world, which reveal the world. That is, there is a world beyond the Puruṣa tattva as well, which has to be destroyed, which has to be dissolved. For explaining this, they have taken five elements beyond Purusa tattva. These five elements have been explained in form of five coverings (Kañcukas) and the instrument for converging has been described as Maya. Hence, they become six elements.

When one starts going beyond these six elements, then comes the Śuddhavidyā element. Even in the Śuddhavidyā element, there is some deficiency in understanding the Shiva bhāva. That is why , that too has been kept in category of Samsāra only.

Beyond him there is the Ishwara Tattva. In Ishwara Tattva also, there is some impression of Idam-bhāva (this-ness) Hence that is also Samsāra only. Beyond that, in Sadāśiva Tattva as well, the universal consciousness is well established but there too the Idam-bhāva remains in the form of some saṁskāra (impression). So that Tattva is also kept in Samsāra only. Hence there are thirty-six elements.[27] Shakti Tattva, Shiva Tattva come after Sadashiv tattva.

27. The final two elements (35th and 36th), which make up the total of thirty-six are Shakti and Shiva. Beyond that is the state of Paramashiva, which is the universal state of pure Shiva consciousness, beyond and yet the source of the thirty-six elements (tattvas). *(Editor's note)*

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K.K.N: The word "spanda", in English it is called vibration in consciousness. I can translate it in Urdu, but I don't know what it is?

SWAMIJI: Spanda can be samsāra also, spanda can be liberation also. The state of Swarupa can also be called spanda and the samsāra can also be called spanda. By Spanda we mean "movement". Movement is not possible when there is no different space, different time and different shape. Movement happens only in a different space, different time and different shape only. When this thing is there, when it vibrates, there should be space (ākasha) for it. There should be space for it.

K.K.N: Fingers of the hand.

SWAMIJI: If the fingers of the hand vibrate, do spanda, there should be a space for this. That space is the samsāra. So this is movement, which will lead you to the world, the samsāra. This is also called spanda. But this Spanda Śāstra, in our Shaiva philosophy, does not make such an explanation. This is that spanda, that movement, which does not require any separate place.

It vibrates in itself.

K.K.N: Does space get created within oneself?

SWAMIJI: The self, the self-position in the self.

Svatmanaḥ, Svatmaniḥ Svatma-sthiti

Svatmanaḥ, Svatmaniḥ Svatma-sthiti. Svatmanaḥ, the state of one's own self, Svatmaniḥ in his own self, Svatma-sthiti and through his own self (Swarupa). Through the krama of your own Swarupa only.

That state is called Spanda. That is Spanda. It is vibrating in its

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own nature, that is Spanda. Vibrating force, acting in its own nature is Spanda.

K.K.N: So one must be feeling it?

SWAMIJI: It is felt only.

N.G: This is what is said:-

(49:49)

ऊर्मिरेषा विबोधाब्धेर्न संविदनया विना ॥१८४॥

ūrmireṣā vibodhābdherna saṁvidanayā vinā /

Tantrāloka 4.184b[28]

What does this mean?

SWAMIJI: This is an example. The tides that occur in the outer ocean, the tides that move, there should be a sky in them.

N.G: Meaning there should be space for the waves of the ocean?

SWAMIJI: Yes. The ocean's waves need sky to move. Because the wave that will rise, where will it rise and what will it go to?

K.K.N: Or up there on the shore.

SWAMIJI: Yes. That is why it should be somewhere else. So Dwaita is there. But this example is one-sided. This vibodhābdher, the ocean of knowledge, the ocean of consciousness, in that ocean there are such tides which are called spanda. Those are the tides which do not require another space.

That is why it is said:

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28. *"Ūrmireṣā vibodhābdhe,* it is just like *ūrmi* (waves or tides) in the ocean of consciousness. You see, the tides in the ocean are not separate from the ocean, they are not other than the ocean. These numberless tides that come out from the ocean are one with the ocean. In the same way, the numberless tides of *spanda* (movements) that rise from that ocean of consciousness are one with that ocean of consciousness." Translation as given by Swamiji in Tantrāloka 4, verse 184b.

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(50:55)

न संविदनया विना

na saṁvidanayā vinā

Without Ūrmi[29] there is no ocean. Ocean is Ūrmi and Ūrmi is ocean.

M.K: Swamiji, Ācārya Abhinavgupta ji says that the earth element has the complete Shiva Bhava and it has even been said that all the elements are found in a simple blade of grass. In this way he has accepted the complete Parasaṁvit in the earth element itself. If this is the case then why is there a need for an ascending order of the elements in the path of Sādhana?

SWAMIJI: I have already told you that ascending and descending order is a leela. We have to know this as a leela and to know this we do sādhana. Because when a person, a sādhaka, a yogi gets the realization, at the time of realization, when he experiences his true nature in samādhi, at that time he experiences that:

"Oh! That was me, already! I was already in this state." This memory comes to him.

To validate this situation, Abhinavagupta-ji says in the commentary of Pratyabhijña-Śāstra:-

(52:17)

स्वात्मावभासो हि न अननुभूतपूर्वः

svātmāvabhāso hi na ananubhūtapūrvah[30]

The self-illumination, by which the state of the self is attained, by which the self is seen, is not an unexperienced state.

---

29. Another name for spanda.
30. This is a quote in Abhinavagupta's commentary of the Īśvarapratyabhijñā Vimarśini, chapter 2 – Kriyādikara – āhnika 3, verse 8. *(Editor's note)*

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Ananubhūtapūrvaḥ means, that it is not the case, that it has not been seen before. He has seen it before. With the passage of time, he has forgotten it. Due to what? Due to the descending order. When he descended, he forgot it. When he ascended, this memory comes, oh I was there! Therefore, this process of sādhana is only till the time one is not realized. When the realization happens, the entire process of sādhana ends.

M.K: How will we explain this to common man that all the elements are found in a blade of grass?

SWAMIJI: Look at the atom. It has so much energy. Even scientists can explain this.

K.K.N: Science itself is a spiritual knowledge. Now Swamiji, I request to allow me to ask one more thing about salvation. For salvation is yoga required or karma required. Or both, karma and yoga are required?

SWAMIJI: What do you mean by karma?

K.K.N: The way we behave, our entire behavior, our thinking, our understanding?

SWAMIJI: Okay, daily routine of life?

K.K.N: Daily routine of life, worldly activities?

SWAMIJI: That should not be neglected. Here in Shaivism one should not neglect.

K.K.N: For salvation, is yoga necessary and behavior also necessary?

SWAMIJI: Behavior is also important. Both are important.

N.G: Swamiji, in relation to sādhana, in scriptures other than Śaiva śāstra. there is a description of Shatdal.[31] But Śaiva śāstra does

31. In meditation, Shatdal (or *Śatadala*) refers to a hundred-petaled lotus. It is a symbolic representation of the inner consciousness, typically representing a thousand-petaled lotus.

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not have Shatdal, here there is a description of cakras, Ṣaṭcakra.[32] So what does this mean? What is meant by Cakras, and by dals?

SWAMIJI: Actually, I have also experienced the Cakras, I have not experienced the petals. The petals are not there. Perhaps other Ācāryas of Shaivism have explained them by calling them petals because they are actually spokes. These are not petals. These are spokes of the wheel. These are Cakras. The chakras emerge there. Not the petals

And Abhinavagupta has also written at the end of the seventh chapter of Tantraloka:

(55:16)

इत्येष सूक्ष्मपरिमरशनशीलनीयश्-
चक्रोदयोऽनुभवशास्त्रादृशा मयोक्तः ॥७-७१

ityeṣa sūkṣmaparimarśanaśīlanīyaś-
cakrodayo'nubhavaśāstradṛśā mayoktaḥ // Tantrāloka 7.71

In this way (eṣa) this (sūkṣma-parimarśanaśīlanīyaḥ) is worth being experienced through subtle sensation, this cakrodaya. This cakrodaya that I have said this from my experience and from the viewpoint of the scriptures.[33]

K.K.N: Swamiji, before we started this talk, I had said a small thing that these companions of mine are on the path of ascent. They know more. My knowledge is very limited. I am like a common man. So the thirst for knowledge that I have inside me is

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32. In meditation, Shat Chakra refers to the system of six major energy centers (chakras) along the spine.

33. "So I have explained the *cakrodaya* according to the way of my own experience, and sayings of masters and *śāstras*, and which is to be attained with refined subtle understanding, *sūkṣma parimarśanaśīlanīya*. You must occupy subtle refined understanding by which you can understand this." Swamiji's English translation from *Tantrāloka* 7.71.

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the thirst of a common man. So a while ago you were talking about Kriyā yoga, Jñāna yoga, Icchā yoga, Anupāya. One of these is discussed a lot, we read a lot about it and people want to know what it is and what is its relation with Kashmir Shaivism - Kuṇḍalinī yoga?

SWAMIJI: Okay, Kuṇḍalinī Yoga.

(56.38)

K.K.N: Tell us something about it.

SWAMIJI: Actually this Kuṇḍalinī Yoga is of three types on the basis of Shaiva Darshan. One is Cit Kuṇḍalinī, second is Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī and third is Parā Kuṇḍalinī. I am telling this on the basis of Shaiva Darshan. Cit Kuṇḍalinī has been described in Kuṇḍalinī Yoga in a predominant manner. The predominant one is Cit Kuṇḍalinī. And Parā Kuṇḍalinī is Universal Kuṇḍalinī. And we have no connection with Parā Kuṇḍalinī, nor can anyone experience Parā Kuṇḍalinī. Yes, one can experience Cit Kuṇḍalinī and one can experience Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī.

The thing is, when we try to concentrate our mind one-pointedly. When we make it one pointed, at that time it happens that Prāṇa and Apāna come as main aspects in this drama, the movements of Prāṇa and Apāna start doing the main work in it.

In what?

In sādhana [meditation practice]. In sādhana, the work of Prāṇa and Apāna is predominant. Ascending and descending, ascending and descending. Although Prāṇāpāna has no connection from the Śaktopāya point of view, even then Prāṇāpāna undergoes a change in Śaktopāya krama. Similarly, in Śāmbhavopāya krama also, Prāṇāpāna undergoes a change. When in Śāmbhavopāya a person maintains only Nirvikalpa-way by maintaining full awareness, then the movement of Prāṇāpāna also

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changes. The movement of Prāṇāpāna proceeds in a very subtle format. Similarly in Śaktopāya also, similarly in the sequence of Āṇavopāya also, where it is predominant anyway.

In Āṇavopāya, Prāṇāpāna is the main one that handles that practice. When the speed of Prāṇāpāna starts becoming subtle, whether it is in the order of Śāmbhavopāya, Śaktopāya or Āṇavopāya, what happens? This Prāṇāpāna stops. When Prāṇāpāna starts stopping, the practitioner feels that perhaps he has to die now. He starts feeling that this is the last moment now. But if the Guru of this practitioner is not immature, then he(the aspirant) remains committed there. He is not afraid. If one gets scared there, he becomes disturbed consequently. So he simply leaves samādhi and comes back to the world.

Actually, there is nothing to fear there. And there is no fear of dying either. When this Prāṇa starts stopping, then it goes to Suṣumna dham. In central vein, in Suṣumna dham, here. The Prāṇāpāna rushes in Suṣumna-dham. It goes down and when it touches the Moolādhāra place, it feels exactly like a fountain, as if it flows upwards till above the skull.

K.K.N: What is this fountain made of. Is it a light? What is it?

SWAMIJI: There is no light. This fountain is the intensity of bliss, Ānanda, Cidānanda. This fountain flows in the form of Cidānanda. And this is called the state of Cit Kuṇḍalinī. Now I will deliberate a bit about Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī.

K.K.N: Yes.

SWAMIJI: The awakening of Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī happens to the one who is not an able recipient of Cit Kuṇḍalinī. The one who does not have awakening of Cit Kuṇḍalinī even after a lot of practice. He has awakening of Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī . The one who is not an able recepient of Cit Kuṇḍalinī. What happens when Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī

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awakens. When the speed of Prāṇāpāna starts becoming subtle, then this Prāṇa stops. After stopping, it again goes to that Suṣumna Dham. What happens then?

Then the same fountain starts rising from the Moolādhāra. But that fountain does not rise like in the case of Cit Kuṇḍalinī- in a flash above the space of the skull. The fountain of Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī does not rise like this. Bit by bit like this, with jerks. First it comes to the Moolādhāra Cakra. There when it touches the Moolādhāra Cakra, there the Cakra starts moving. A wheel starts moving. He, that sādhaka, experiences the movement of wheel and he can also hear it's sound from inside, of the movement of that Cakra. Just as we can hear the sound of a fan moving, similarly he hears the sound of the movement of that Cakra. Then like this, after a while, there is another jerk, then this fountain rises up, filled with that bliss - God consciousness, then the second Cakra starts rotating like this. At that time, two Cakras start rotating simultaneously. He hears the sound of the two Cakras moving. Like this, like this, all the six Cakras arise. Its name is Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī. Yogis acquire siddhis from this Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī.

Now its second form. One who is not able to receive this, who is a very mediocre yogi, a yogi of lower level, he also has such a movement. When this life force rushes (May God save all) it goes down, that fountain does not rise from below. What happens, there is no fountain, the Bhrumadhya Cakra moves. From here, between the two eyebrows, it starts rotating and the Cakras below do not rotate. Then these jerks come downwards. There is no fountain of bliss there. A person cannot experience the blissful state there.

K.K.N: So what happens in this, is it painful?

SWAMIJI: There is no pain. He enjoys it just like an electric

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current.

Electric shock. Peaceful electric shock when it starts moving. He experiences peaceful shock during jerks.

K.K.N: In the first two there is ascent; in this there is descent?

SWAMIJI: In this, there is descent after descent. The descent is one when the inhalation is done, one goes down. One does not rise up. Then from here one goes down again. This is in the form of Cakras. Similarly, in the form of Cakras, the Moolādhāra Cakra also starts moving. As a result, it does not have any meaning, rather, going further, the person remains deprived of samādhi throughout his life.

K.K.N: What is its benefit?

SWAMIJI: Nothing. It is of no use.

K.K.N: So now we tell the common people about the principle of Swatantraya, an important principle of Kashmir Shaivism, if hey have any doubts about it, we request you to clear those doubts lso today.

SWAMIJI: Swatantraya means the freedom to come down from above. He comes down from above. How did he come down from above? Through Swatantrya

(01:05:57)

निजशक्तिवैभवभराद् अण्डचतुष्टयमिदं विभागेन ।
शक्तिर्माया प्रकृतिः पृथ्वी चेति प्रभावितं प्रभुणा ॥४॥

nija-śakti-vaibhava-bharād aṇḍa-catuṣṭayam-idaṁ vibhāgena /
śaktir-māyā prakṛtiḥ pṛthvī ceti prabhāvitaṁ prabhuṇā //4//

(Paramārthasāra)

The Lord, whether it is Lord Shiva, Shankar, Krishna or anyone else, [God is only one], HE [nija-śakti-vaibhava-bharāt] has the glory of his independent power, his splendor. Expansion, with that

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expansion, he has created the world.

K.K.N: Iccha Shakti.

SWAMIJI: No. He has created the world by the power of Swatantrya shakti.

Which world?

[śaktir-māyā prakṛtiḥ pṛthvī ceti prabhāvitaṁ prabhuṇā] Shakti-andā, Māyā-andā, Prakriti-andā, and Prithvi-andā. The Prithvi-andā has the element of Prithvi. Of the thirty-six elements, the Prithvi-andā contains the Prithvi-element. Prakriti-andā contains the elements from the Jalā tattvā to the Prakriti-tattvā. The Māyā-andā has elements from Puruṣa-tattvā to the Māyā-tattvā. And the Shakti-andā contains Shuddh Vidyā, Ishwara, Sadāshiva and Shakti-Tattvā. And to prove that Swatantraya, the Swatantraya has been discussed here, in Kashmir Shaivism. Swatantraya must me there. Leela is that where he can descend and ascend as well.

K.K.N: In many religions, one thing is said. A while ago, Hukku Sahab was talking about the fact that in our regular life karma is there. If karma is good, we shall get a good fruit. If karma is bad, we shall get a bad fruit. And in religions, there is a feeling of fear in religions. If you do good karma, you will go to heaven, if you do bad karma, you will go to hell. So, for as long as I have been listening to you, you have not scared me even once. So, can you tell me whether there is any place for fear in Kashmir Shaivism or not?

SWAMIJI: Laughter. No, there is no need to be afraid. This is a leela (divine play).

K.K.N: So in this , there is no heaven and hell.

SWAMIJI:

(01:08:16)

स्वयं बध्नाति देवेशः स्वयं चैव विमुञ्चतु ॥१३-१२३

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स्वयं भोक्ता स्वयं ज्ञाता स्वयं चैवोपलक्षयेत् ।

svayaṁ badhnāti deveśaḥ svayaṁ caiva vimuñcati //

Tantrāloka 13.123

svayaṁ bhoktā svayaṁ jñātā svayaṁ caivopalakṣayet /[34]

Understand this as a leela. This is all a leela. It is a fact that our creator is Lord Shiva, we are his creation. Lord Shiva has given birth to us. He is our father. How can he destroy us. This belief should never be there. Does a son ever fear his father?

K.K.N: There are many religions in our country, rather in the world, that say that if you want the path of salvation, then leave the path of enjoyment. Shaivism says that enjoyment and liberation can go hand in hand. So if a person can leave enjoyment, then one bond is broken. So tell me, how without breaking this bond, one can get liberated?

SWAMIJI: The bondage is curiosity.

K.K.N: So it is not a bondage

SWAMIJI: No, the bondage, the means of bondage for a soul is curiosity for enjoyment. That is not enjoyment itself. Enjoyment itself is not bondage. Bondage does not come from enjoyment. Bondage comes from curiosity.

K.K.N: Curiosity means ignorance?

SWAMIJI: No. I will explain curiosity to you sometime. Curiosity means, suppose I have completely given up pleasures

34. "This Lord of Lords binds himself with his own free will, and liberates himself with his own free will. Lord Śiva is not only this, Lord Śiva is bound also. And at times he becomes his master also; fraud master also, and compassionate and pure master also, i.e., Shaivite blissful master. He comes across as blissful master just to reveal his nature; he comes across as fraud master just to conceal his nature, more and more, day by day." Swamiji – English translation of *Tantrāloka* 13.123.

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and enjoyments, Hmm? I tell myself, this is just bad behaviour, leave it. Curiosity leaks from there. It's curiosity remains in his mental state. Whose curiosity? "Which all pleasures have I discarded." As a result he has actually held all of that. He has not left it.

That is why Abhinavagupta has put this principle in front of us at the end of the second chapter of Bhagavad Gītā:-

(01:10:32)

अहो नु चेतसश्चित्रा गतिस्त्यागेन यत्किल ।
आरोहत्येव विषयाञ्छ्रयंस्तांस्तु परित्यजेत् ॥२॥

aho nu cetasaścitrā gatistyāgena yatkila /
ārohatyeva viṣayāñchrayaṁtāṁstu parityajet //2//[35]

(not recited in full)

Aho nu cetasaścitrā, Oh brothers! Listen, the movement of the mind is a very amazing movement. It is very difficult to understand the movement of the mind. [Tyāgena yatkila] He who renounced pleasures [ārohatyeva viṣayāñ] all pleasures came upon him, i.e., curiosity remains. [śrayaṁtāṁstu] He who was trapped in pleasures [parityajet] became free. He doesn't have even the minutest curiosity or enjoyment for that. Absolutely he hates these indulgences – so he has actually quit them.

This doctrine is accepted by the predominant Shaivism . So Shaivism says "No, there is nothing to be gained by renunciation. Giving up will bring passion and holding on will bring renunciation. Keep it like this." So the way we are placed by our

35. "The state of one's mind is very rare and very difficult to understand; you cannot understand the state of your mind. The one who shuns the worldly activities, he possesses it; the one who possesses it, he shuns it – this is the trick!" Swamiji's English translation of concluding verse of Bhagavad Gītā chapter two.

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Master, by our Creator just go on like that. This is the right way.

K.K.N: In Shaivism, in the South, there is talk of giving up worldly pleasures. So that too is a form of Shaivism, isn't it?

SWAMIJI: That is not Trika Śāstra. That is not described in Trika Śāstra.

K.K.N: But it is Shaivism only?

SWAMIJI: Yes, there is Shaivism - Pāṣupata sect. It is Pāṣupata sect.

K.K.N: So what is the difference between that and this for the common man?

SWAMIJI: That is Dvaita Śāstra. As far as Advaita is concerned, the school of Advaita Śāstra can be seen only in Trika Śāstra and nowhere else.

K.K.N: Rahul Sankrityayan[36] has made some observation. I don't know to what extent it is correct or not. He has stated that Shaivism is actually a form of Buddhism which existed earlier. Buddha was removed and Shiva was placed. He observed this. What is your opinion about it?

SWAMIJI: There can be no harm in believing this. Buddha is also a form of Shiva. Because I have already told you that whatever exists in the world is a form of Shiva. In one form or another, it is all Shiva.

K.K.N: If we take this point, Swamiji, we people who are wandering here and there, sometimes going to this pilgrimage, sometimes to that pilgrimage, sometimes one darśana, sometimes another darśana, when everywhere it is the same thing, then what is the need to go anywhere?

SWAMIJI: There is no need to go anywhere, just keep your

36. Rahul Sankrityayan (born Kedarnath Pandey; 9 April 1893 – 14 April 1963) was an Indian author, essayist, playwright, historian, and scholar of Buddhism who wrote in Hindi and Bhojpuri. (Editor's note)

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mind clean and just embrace the one who is the embodiment of consciousness and bliss, Lord Shiva, who resides in your heart.

K.K.N: This small condition that you have put in two or three words is very difficult. Tell me how to purify the mind?

SWAMIJI: Leave aside all such things, worries. These things are not recognized by Shaivism. Nanak-ji also says:

"नानक रबसंभाल सबगल अच्छी"[37]

"O Nanak! Remember/care for that Lord (God), then whatever you do, that is right, truly right."

K.K.N: Swamiji, we asked you whatever questions arose in our mind. We were satisfied with all the questions and the answers we got. And the listeners must have also benefited from them. But questions give rise to more questions and answers give rise to more questions, so this cycle continues.

With this thought also that we do not want to tire you too much. We are very grateful to you. You have been very kind to us.

|| JAI GURUDEV ||

37. Literally: "Serve the Name of the Lord, and become the servant of His servants"

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Interview - 2

Interview in Kashmiri done by a team of scholars from Radio Kashmir (1983) (English Translation of the Interview)

In 1983, another team from Radio Kashmir arrived at the Ishwar Ashram. This team comprised Professor Prithvinath Pushp, Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki and Prof Kashinath Dhar. This interview was conducted in Kashmiri language.

SWAMIJI: Shaivācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo Maharaj
PUSHP: Professor Prithvinath Pushp
INT: Interviewer (any one amongst the interviewing team)

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Anchor: We are all present in a very memorable group meeting. Our guest is the famous saint and philosopher of Kashmir, whose writings and talks have influenced and will continue to influence so many people in and outside Kashmir. In this meeting Professor Prithvinath Pushp, Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki and Prof Kashinath Dhar will interact with Swamiji. The subject of this meeting is of critical importance, because in this will be discussed gross and subtle guiding principles of that philosophy, that darśana, which is known as Kashmir Shaiva philosophy or Trika Philosophy. (1.17). This philosophy is considered a gift from Kashmiri scholars, wise men and philosophers to the modern world.

Kashmiri Shaiva Philosophy or Kashmir Shaivism is the summary or gist of so many other philosophies. The history of Kashmir Shaivism is very old. Its branches have been in past thousands of years, in different forms and shapes, blossoming and gaining strength all the time. Some important personalities who

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have given this philosophies an all round dimension are Ācārya Vasugupta, Ācārya Abhinavagupta, Momathācārya, Ācārya Bhatta Kallata, Ācārya Yogarāj, Ācārya Somānandanātha, Ācārya Utpaladeva. Ācārya Swami Lakshmanjoo is in the present world, a rider and traveller of the same chain and sequence. At present Swamiji is 76 years old. Swamiji was born in 1907 in Namchabal, Srinagar. It is that period when the Dogra ruler, Maharaja Partap singh was ruling over Kashmir. Namchabal is very close to Fatehkadal. They were staying very close to Mangaleshwar and Dilwarkhan. Swamiji's father was named Narainjoo or Narainjoo Raina. He was a noble person. He had his own boats and shikaras and so was also known as Nav Narain. Swamiji's elder brother Sh Maheshwar Nath Raina was a spiritually inclined person. He was engrosssed in his own spiritual practice. Swami Lakshmanjoo , in his childhood, was deeply influenced by him and started his spiritual inclination with his company. Swami Ram ji was the master of Swamiji's elder brother, Maheshwar Nath Raina.

(3.30)

A prominent and senior disciple of Swami Ram ji was Swami Mahtab Kak. After his brother left for his heavenly abode, Swamiji studied and took initiation from Swami Mahtab Kak. Swamiji's spiritual journey started in early childhood when he was just 6 years old. At 20 years, he left his household and reached Sadhuganga, near Sopore, and reached a forest and started meditating there. He stayed there for three months. Then he came home. Then he went to Chattarhome and started doing meditation there. He then went to Gosonigund near Anantnag, at the ashram of Swami Atmaram and stayed there for 3 months. Then he came back to home and started meditating again.

(4.25)

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After some time, his father made a residential complex for him in Ishber, near Nishat. And since then he has been spending his time in this very place.

At present, we are in the same Ishber ashram. Swamiji is sitting in his asana at the designated place. On his left is Jenab Nazki Sahib, in front is Prof. Pushp Sahib. Between Jenab Nazki Sahib and Prof Pushp Sahib is Prof Dhar. Prof Pushp Sahib will start the process of conversation with Swamiji.

PUSHP: Swamiji, you, both absorbed as well as explained the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. You have expanded as well as summarized this philosophy. The commentary on Bhagavad Gita of Ācārya Abhinavagupta, *Gita samgraha,* has been first edited by you. You have done Hindi revelation of *Kramastotra* and *Sambpanchashika.* Also you have done the Hindi commentary of *Utpaladeva's Śivastotravali.* Besides this, you have been teaching the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. Every Sunday, you are teaching this philosophy even these days. Also you are teaching this to the foreign devotees on Tuesday and Saturday.

Many learned people and scholars came from different parts of India, actually different parts of world, to learn the nuances of Shaivism from you. They read and went back to their places and did translations in different languages of the world. Dr. Silburn from France came to you. She read *Śiva Sutras, Pratibhijñā Hṛdaya, Vijñāna Bhairava, Tantrāloka, Tantrasāra, Paramārthasāra, Parapraveśika, Spanda Kārikā* and other Shaiva texts, and then translated many of them into French language. Among these *Vijñāna Bhairava* has become very well known. She is also doing work on *Tantrāloka.* From our country, those who came, I shall take only one name, Dr. Jaidev Singh, who read *Pratibhijñā Hṛdayam*

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under your guidance and presented it in English. Very recently he translated *Śiva Sūtra Vimarśini* in English and presented it nicely. I have heard he shall be coming to you to read *Spanda Nirnaya.* Swamiji, listeners would want to hear from you that when and how were you taken toward Shaivism.

(7.23)

SWAMIJI: I had a brother, his name was, Maheshwar Nath Raina. His master, his guru was Swami Ram. Swami Ram had initiated him. He (my brother) was doing some practice and he was also very much attached to me.

PUSHP: Your brother, Maheshwarnath ji.

SWAMIJI: Maheshwarnath ji. I had curiosity to see what he is doing quietly. I used to ask him to tell me about what he was doing. I would have been between 5 and 6 years. He told me something. I would be having something from my past as well, some divine connection. The moment he told me, I started doing and I became unconscious. I must have been around five and a half years old then. Then they (the family) used to take great care of me. My brother told me just to look at tip of my nose; that is all. I used to keep my sight on tip of nose and just become unconscious.

PUSHP: Get into samadhi

Swamiji No. It was not samadhi. What I understand now is that at that time I used to get completely unconscious.

PUSHP: How old was your brother

SWAMIJI: He would have been 22 years old then.

PUSHP: Okay, did you go to school?

SWAMIJI: I went to school afterwards.

PUSHP: You went to school afterwards.

(8.47)

SWAMIJI: In school also, I used to take my own mat and during

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the time of school prayers, I would do my own practice. I had become addicted for getting unconscious. I wanted to get unconscious again and again.

PUSHP: What were you thinking when you were focusing your attention on nose.

SWAMIJI: Nothing! The moment I focused my attention on [the tip of my] nose . . . actually in childhood, one does not have multiple thoughts, so it is very pure and the mind is attentive. Ekāgratā[38], exists naturally there. So it hardly took any time. [Then, when] I used to have food, and when I finished my food and got satisfaction after having food, then, I used to become unconscious.

INT: You were attending school.

SWAMIJI: Yes, I attended for a long time but my mind was always towards this; towards getting into this. But I did not know what it was. This was something beyond my imagination. I used to sink under a vast ocean. I used to love it immensely. And I felt it is death.

INT: And you felt like you were sinking?

SWAMIJI: But it was sweet.

(10.27)

INT: Okay, sweet. So it was sweet also?

SWAMIJI: Yes, sweetness also. So this was the reason that I got attached to his [Swami Rām's] main disciple Swami Mahatab Kak-ji. Then I used to go to him. He subsequently initiated me and then I used to work according to that. Then I got satisfaction and the unconsciousness went away.

INT: From this, it is concluded that Swami Mahtab Kak gave you initiation, dīkṣā

38. Lit, one-pointed concentration of the mind.

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SWAMIJI: Yes, latest *dīkṣā* has been from him.

INT: The other meaning that comes from this is that this unconsciousness, did awareness come from there?

SWAMIJI: I feel that was the seed. That was the seed that was sown.

INT: So this is also true that, first one should have that, and then only one can move to a higher level.

SWAMIJI: Yes, first some unconsciousness.... First you must forget everything and then you can get entry in God consciousness.

INT: So then first we have to undo, unlearn, and then this process starts.

SWAMIJI: Yes, undo, unlearn. Till then how can you find it! Till we wash our hands, how can we work?

[In reference to Swamiji's earlier fainting episodes:]

SWAMIJI: They [my parents] used to take me there – to Swami Ram – and he used to tell them, "He does not have fits, do not worry". (laughter) Do not worry he will become fine himself.

That was the start of my curiosity about Shaivism. Now leave this. After this, he left for his heavenly abode, my brother. Then Swami Ram also attained Mahā samādhi. I was around 8 years then. He had his senior disciple. His name was Swami Mahtab Kak. He also has attained Mahā samādhi now. I did my formal learning under him. At that time I was 16 years old. So I was doing my meditation as instructed. I gained a lot from that. The phases of unconsciousness were over. So I started wholeheartedly my work of remembering the Lord. Some time passed, I had, we call it svarūpa sakṣatkāra, realization of the Self.

INT: That is the [direct] vision of glory.

SWAMIJI: That is the vision of glory and bliss. Yes, I got that, to

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some extent. After this I had some turmoil within myself. I could not stay any further at home. Consequently I had a desire to go somewhere in isolation. I told my father "Give me some secluded place, I want to stay there!" He said, "You are here, what is the problem. You have isolation here also". He made a separate room for me and I used to mediate there, but still I was troubled by the noise around. So at the age of 21 years, one midnight, I left the house and reached Sadhuganga, near Sopore. I did not tell anyone, not even my master. I reached Sadhuganga and then I did my practice in isolation in the forest, I used to do abhyāsa (meditation), remembering the Lord.

INT: Yes Sir, your own practice?

SWAMIJI: My own practice. I had some more success there. [But] they [my parents] reached there, they tried going to Kohala because they did not know I was at Sadhuganga. [And afterwards] they got my master there.

INT: How long were you there?

SWAMIJI: I was there for three months. I meditated there for three months. Then they got my master, Swami Mahatab Kak, and he got me back to Srinagar. He got me back. I went straight to Harvan. There is a place called Chattehome there. He gave me a secluded place there. So I started doing my practice there. My father did all arrangement for me. He kept a servant to take care of me.

INT: For cooking food for you?

SWAMIJI: Yes. So I started doing my practice there. The landlord of the place came one day, [but] I used to be in seclusion in those days; I did not like any visitors. He came, with his children and family, in the place where I was staying in Chatchabal. I got very uncomfortable. There was lot of disturbance there that day.

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So I left that place at night itself. I left my belongings, and the servant and left that place at 3:00 am in the night. On foot, I reached Shalimar. Took a boat from there to Dalgate. And from Dalgate, I walked again. Those days we did not have tongas freely. I reached Amirakadal in Srinagar. I took a bus [from] there to Anantnag. I took another bus from Anantnag to Achaabal.

I met a Kashmiri Pandit there. He asked me where I was going. I told him I have heard in Gosonigund there is Swami Atmaram-ji. I want to go there. I thought there would be isolation there, so I will stay there and do my practice. But I was feeling quite hungry. I had taken some Halwa[39] with me, one khasu[40], at night only, while leaving Chatterhome. I had kept it in a basket with me. So I reached Achabal. This Kashmiri Pandit told me, "I will come with you to Gosonigund to Swami Atmaram"

(16.27)

INT: Yes Sir.

SWAMIJI: So we were walking and I told him I am feeling hungry. He said I have my maternal uncle place here. We shall have food there. He went inside the house in Achabal. He closed the door and I was waiting outside, waiting for him to call me inside for having food because I was feeling very hungry at that time. It must have been 2.30 pm at that time. He came out after having lunch. He said, "Sir there was no food; there was food for only one person there!" So we kept on walking. Suddenly I remembered that I have that halwa with me. So I took it out, I gave half to him and took half myself. I did not think that I am hungry and should have it all. I thought he is my companion so gave him half. So we reached Quazigund, and I stayed there. I had satisfaction doing my

39. A sweet dish made by semolina, sugar, oil and nuts

40. A brass cup for having tea

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practice there. I returned from there after 2-3 months. This is a long story.

INT: Sir you can say...

SWAMIJI: Then I came back and my parents made a separate house for me. So I stayed in the house in Fatehkadal and had apparent realization.– only Lord knows what actually happened – apparently I had! Only Lord knows what actually happened.

INT: Have you been outside Kashmir?

SWAMIJI: Yes, I do go outside Kashmir, during winters.

INT: Now? Or during the period of search also you were going?

SWAMIJI: No, not during that period of my spiritual search.

INT: So during that period you were here only?

SWAMIJI: Yes, I was in Kashmir only during my spiritual quest.

INT: So all your teachers were in Kashmir?

SWAMIJI: Yes, in Kashmir.

INT: You did not need to go outside Kashmir?

SWAMIJI: No, I did not need to go outside Kashmir.

INT: So is this truly the land of sages.

SWAMIJI: Yes, there is no doubt.

INT: Is it still even now?

SWAMIJI: Yes, even now.

INT: I have doubt about that.

SWAMIJI: No, it is even now.

INT: So then what happened next, how did further evolution happen, and especially how were you drawn to Shaivism? For example other things are there: Vedanta is there; other philosophies are there.

SWAMIJI: No, I did read Vedanta also, but my heart did not find attachment to Vedanta.

INT: So why did you find attachment to Shaivism. That is what

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we want to know.

SWAMIJI: I found this very sweet and appealing. Appealing because it has a practical shape. This is Advaita (non-duality). Like you have oneness in Vedanta, this also has oneness. But Vedanta has oneness, but coexisting with duality all along, in the background duality is all along. Caste, creed, and colour, is there all along.

INT: That does not have it.

SWAMIJI: That (Shaivism) does not have it. It is the same for a Brahmin, for a Hindi, for a Muslim. I have told you this before also.

INT: Yes, you have told before as well.

SWAMIJI: This is universal. This is not religion actually. This is a philosophy, a thought.

(19.32)

INT: This is like a principle of life? There is no necessity or compulsion of any religion, Hindu, Muslim or any other?

SWAMIJI: All have a right to follow this philosophy. So that is why I feel very interested that western scholars also are there. I teach them wholeheartedly.

(19.56)

INT: I have a request. The present day world is a world of luxury. There is lot of turbulence because the mind moves a lot. It does not stay on the ground but it goes up and moves around a lot. Struggles a lot. By this, instead of peace, it gets more restless. All people around the world are in search of peace. To get that peace and to come out of the present worries, to what extent does this philosophy help?

SWAMIJI: This philosophy is the one that solves these issues.

INT: So for the common man, please tell us the basic principles, how will he come out of his worries, and how will he

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find peace?

SWAMIJI: For this he has to keep one-pointedness.

INT: One-pointedness?

SWAMIJI: One pointedness, and to withdraw from outwardly (world).

INT: From what? After all, he has to run his household, his duties.

SWAMIJI: Yes, household duties have to be done. But keep away from temptations, from desires, from lust, needless temptations, greed.

INT: Sir, we are dumb, we are foolish. We have come to learn the right path from you. If a person is in a river, you are telling him that you are in a river but do not wet your clothes. His clothes will definitely get wet.

SWAMIJI: Yes they will get wet but...

INT: We are there, our household work is there. House is there. Household chores are there. Children are there, relatives are there, domestic animals, cows, there are hundreds of things to be managed.

SWAMIJI: Yes, true, but discipline has to be kept. If he keeps discipline, the clothes will not become wet. If he keeps discipline, his clothes shall not become wet. In water also, his clothes will not become wet.

(21.40)

INT: But we are in deep water.

SWAMIJI: Yes of course. But if he keeps discipline, they will not get wet.

INT: What is that technique, by which his clothes shall not become wet?

SWAMIJI: So he has to conduct himself, first of all [by

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maintaining] awareness.

INT: Awareness?

SWAMIJI: Yes. And the principles that have been stated in the yamas and niyamas. Follow them. For example, speaking the truth, ahimsā, not hurting anyone.[41] Not grabbing share of someone else.

INT: Not taking what belongs to anyone else?

SWAMIJI: Yes. Not taking what belongs to anyone else. Not stealing. Following brahmācārya. Brahmācārya means controlling one self from lust. So like this, there are many principles that we have to follow. If we follow them, then we will not be strained.

INT: It is said that in Shaivism, yoga and bhoga are complimentary to each other. They are not contradictory.

SWAMIJI: Yoga and bhoga (enjoyment) are complimentary to each other but..

INT: No, you have to tell us in simple terms, in terms that ordinary people understand. So that everyone will understand.

(23.00)

SWAMIJI: Staying in the world, using all the items in the world and still keeping out of it.

INT: Yes sir

SWAMIJI: That is bhoga (enjoyment) and moksha (liberation).

INT: Yes sir.

SWAMIJI: "Dil ba yār, dast ba kār."[42]

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41. The Shiva view of the Yamas and Niyamas is fully explained by Swamiji in 'Self Realization in Kashmir Shaivism, Talks on Discipline, chapter. 4, pp. 71-92.

42. Persian "Keep your heart with the Beloved, and your hands at world." In other words, stay spiritually connected (to God or what you love) while continuing to work and fulfil your responsibilities in the world. (*Editor's note*)

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INT: Yes Sir.

SWAMIJI: That is what has been accepted in Kashmir Shaivism. One has to do practice, nothing else. Without meditation and practice, nothing is possible.

INT: But how will anyone make progress if there is no guide.

SWAMIJI: Yes that is true. Guide is required. First his guide is his own awareness. Then comes master. His guru.

INT: So when you started your sādhana practice, what happened? With whom did you come in contact those days; or discussed the basic principles?

SWAMIJI: Then I used to go to my master, I have already told you, Swami Mahatab Kak. Scholarly he was not advanced, but Spiritually he was very advanced.

INT: Practical aspects he was very good.

SWAMIJI: Yes, very advanced in practice.

INT: Not so much in theory, but very much in practice?

SWAMIJI: But I had keen desire to know theory also. So secretly, I used to go to a pandit ji. Those days, Durga Prasad Kachroo was my friend. He got that Pandit ji, his name was, Pandit Maheshwar Razdan.[43]

INT: Research Department?

SWAMIJI: Yes.

INT: [He was] very well known.

SWAMIJI: Yes. So with him we finalized. Then one day we were sitting. This was the first day, the first day when he came to teach me Shaivism theory.

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43. Pandit Maheshwar Nath Razdan served as a scholar in the Jammu and Kashmir Research and Publication Department of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. His erudition and competence is amply acknowledged by the editors of the Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies in the introductions or prefaces to a large number of volumes. (*Editor's note*)

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INT: First lesson?

SWAMIJI: At that time I was playing chess with Durga Prashad Kachroo. In a room we were playing chess. Laughter. He entered and sat in the chair. We asked him if he would have tea. He said no. I have already taken tea. So we told him, "Sir we are a bit busy this time"

EVERYONE: Laughter.

SWAMIJI: And so we will start on another day. Please come tomorrow, we will start tomorrow."

INT: (Laughter) Had you called him on that day?

SWAMIJI: Yes, we had called him.

INT: How old were you at that time?

SWAMIJI: About 22 years. While leaving he said "Prathame grāse makshikā pātā"

INT: With the first bite itself, a fly was there in the food!

SWAMIJI: So the message was - what would you digest (with this kind of behaviour)?

INT: In Kashmiri terms "phir zang!"[44]

SWAMIJI: Phir Zang. Then he did not come. Sir, he did not come, then I waited for eight days, he did not come. Then we went to plead before him. He said, "Don't do this again; was the game of chess that important, more important than studying Shaivism?" After that, I learnt Shaivism from him in full details, properly.

INT: Then what did you read?

SWAMIJI: First I read grammar. Sanskrit Kaumudi.[45] First I had to read language. Then I read Shaivism.

INT: First control over language is needed? Till full knowledge

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44. *phir zang* is a term used in Kashmiri language when so work is not accomplished.
45. A famous rearrangement and explanation of Pānini's grammar rules for Sanskrit language.

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of language is there (how can texts be understood)?

SWAMIJI: Then I read Shaivism, in detail.

(26.54)

INT: He was an accomplished scholar of Kashmir Shaivism. And for the practical part you went to Swami Mahtab Kak. Now Shaiva Darśana is there, but many forms and names are there for this. This is called Kashmir Shaivism. Why is it called Kashmir Shaivism? What is the reason for this?

SWAMIJI: I will tell you. There is a place between Ganga and Yamuna. It is called Antarvedi. There was a scholar of Shaivism there, and he was spiritually also very advanced.

INT: Spiritually advanced also?

SWAMIJI: Yes, Spiritually advanced also. He did not have only theoretical knowledge.

INT: Practical also?

SWAMIJI: Practical also?

INT: For these things, one should have practical knowledge also?

SWAMIJI: Yes. His name was Atrigupta. Atrigupta was his name and was reading Shaivism as well as preaching Shaivism there. Till that time it was not termed Kashmir Shaivism. Till that time it was only called Shaiva Darśana.

INT: Yes.

SWAMIJI: In those days in Kashmir, Lalitaditya was the king.

INT: Ruling king of Kashmir.

SWAMIJI: Ruling King. He was very attached to Saints. So asking from different sources, he reached Atrigupta. There he was very impressed with his philosophy and his spirituality. He fell at his feet and pleaded before him. He requested him, "Please come to our Kashmir and kindly stay there only." Atrigupta was a

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householder. He had wife. I am not sure about his children. That is not known. Because these details are given by Ācārya Abhinavagupta

INT: Yes, Ācārya Abhinavagupta gives us these details.

SWAMIJI: Ācārya Abhinavagupta gives these details. So he got him [Atrigupta] at his expense. So here was a palace of Pravarasena, near Latipora. Those days Srinagar was Latipora only. Just adjacent to that was Pravarapuri. There was palace of Pravarasena there. He gave that palace to Atrigupta and told him "Sir, this is all yours; you stay here." He gave money for him as well. He did all the arrangements for his livelihood.

(29.43)

INT: Gave him land and everything?

SWAMIJI: Yes everything. And so he started his work. But his teaching did not become too widespread. After several generations, in their household, came Vārāhagupta (after many generations). His name was Vārāhagupta. Vārāhagupta was also an adept in Shaivism and was spiritually elevated also. Still he did not become too important. He had a son whose name was Narasimhagupta and, Ācārya Abhinavagupta was born to Narsimhagupta.

INT: Between which time period?

SWAMIJI: Between 9th and 10th century was Ācārya Abhinavagupta's period.

INT: It took 100-200 years in between?

SWAMIJI: Yes, it took 100-200 years. Ācārya Abhinavagupta's period was very important. He did exhaustive work on Kashmir Shaivism. He truly exposed Shaivism. Almost like holding one's hand and telling, "This is Shaivism!"

INT: He discussed [Shaivism] in detail?

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46. The Lord (Pati), bondage (pāśa), and the bound (paśu).

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SWAMIJI: In detail.

INT: Now please tell us what did Ācārya Abhinavagupta do in Kashmir which the Southern philosophers could not do?

SWAMIJI: The Shaiva philosophy of the south, that is there?.

INT: What did Ācārya Abhinavagupta do or give which was different?

SWAMIJI: There are some important differences. One great difference is that they consider Pati, Pāśa and Pāśu.[46] So that is also a triple science. They also consider the threefold science.

INT: Yes Sir.

SWAMIJI: This one, the Southern Shaivism that is there. But they consider Śiva as pati, Śakti as pāśa.

INT: Sir for the benefit of listeners, please simplify, so that they will understand.

SWAMIJI: I will tell you. Ācārya Abhinavagupta says Śiva, but they (Southern Shaivites) consider as pati. Pati means master. Śiva is Śiva. But one misunderstanding has happened to them [Southern shaivites]. In understanding what Shaivism is.

(32.18)

They have considered Śakti as pāśa. Pāśa is bondage. [But in Kashmir Shaivism] Śakti does not function only for bondage. Śakti also does liberation.

INT: It binds and releases as well.

SWAMIJI: This is missed by them [Southern Shaivites]. This point is a very important point.

INT: This is an important difference. So differentiation adds to it.

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47. In Kashmir Shaivism māyā śakti is responsible for bondage, which is Lord Śiva moving down into the world; and svātantrya śakti is responsible for liberation, i.e., the limited individual recognizing (pratyabhijñā) their real nature as one with Śiva. (*Editor's note*)

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SWAMIJI: Yes, bheda adds to it – pāśa. So [they say] when it is pāśa, there is no hope of liberation for individual. Individual shall never be liberated. But as per Abhinvagupta, Śakti enables you to go down as well as climb up.[47] So this is an important point.

INT: Very important.

SWAMIJI: Then, they have been too much impressed by idol worship.

INT: This you have told earlier also. Idol worship is not important in Kashmir Shaivism

SWAMIJI: Idol worship is there but, I shall read one śloka here.

आश्यानं सीद्रसस्यौघं साकारत्वमुपगतम् |
जगद्रुपतया वन्दे प्रत्यक्षं भैरवं वपुः

āśyānaṁ cidrasasyaughaṁ sākāratvamupāgatam |
jagadrūpatayā vande pratyakṣaṁ bhairavaṁ vapuḥ ||[48]

All this world that is there, this is the coagulation of this, i.e., Lord Śiva has been coagulated. It is all his manifestation. Āśyānaṁ upāgatam, all this is solidified. Jagadrūpatayā vande, so I am bowing to this world itself. So this is murti pūja, idol worship. What is idol worship.

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48. "This is the coagulation of *cid rasa,* the fluid of God consciousness; the ānanda of God consciousness, which has been coagulated and created space and time. And so this whole universe is only the existence of God consciousness nothing else. I bow to that universe, I don't bow to God consciousness, I bow to that universe which is the expansion of God consciousness, it is the commentary of God consciousness.So you should not get afraid from saṁsāra. There is no question, there is no room, for fearing this universe, because the universe, as long as it is concerned, it is the actual formation of God consciousness in coagulated form." Wisdom in Kashmir Shaivism, verse 8. Swami Lakshmanjoo.

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INT: Yes sir.

SWAMIJI: The individual. Respect individual, serve individual. You should serve everyone. You should love everyone. If you create love and affection within each other, with the world, with the public of the world, you are doing worship of god. In Shaivism it is said:

हृदयगुहगे गतं सर्वज्ञं सर्वगम परित्यज्य |
प्राणमति मितामतिरशिवम् शिवशयाश्मादिमश्लाघ्यम्

hṛidayaguhāge gataṁ sarvajñaṁ sarvagaṁ parityajya |
praṇamati mitamatiraśivaṁ śivāśayāśmādimaślāghyam ||[49]

Tantrāloka 4.256, Jayaratha's commentary

Hṛdyaya guhage gataṁ, the cave of heart that is there, the one who is sitting there, resides there, sarvajñaṁ sarvagaṁ who is all-pervading, Lord Śiva, parityajya pushing him aside, praṇamati, mitamatir, the one who is a fool worships the one who is aśilam śivam not Śiva, sarvāśreya[50] who is without any consciousness, aślāghyam earth, stone, etc., he does Prāṇams to that.

(35.00)

INT: Lord is sitting in front of him and he is not concerned about that. He is worried about stones and other things.

INT: That is what Paramānanda said.

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49. They have said this also that, "that liṅga which is situated in the cave of your heart, internal heart, that Śiva, that Śiva liṅga who is omnipresent and all-pervading; leaving aside that worship, mitamatir, those who are ignorant people, they worship those external idols." They worship those external idols, which are already lifeless. They have no life. When you worship that idol it is lifeless. And aślāghyam, it is not worth worshipping. This is said by Kaulācāra. Swami Lakshmanjoo, Tantrāloka 4.256, Jayaratha's commentary.

50. Lit., all around inferior.

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Dosh manz dosh bagh prannenne
Taar Devi ta devta annene

(35.15)

INT: Now there are other things. There are some philosophies that look down about the physical body. Look down upon it. They make it suffer. They give different kinds of tortures to the body. What is the view of Shaiva Darśana on this?

SWAMIJI: Shaiva Darshan does not recognize this.

INT: Shaiva Darśana thought Śiva Sutras has stated, *'Rango śariram'*.

SWAMIJI: *'Rango'ntarātmā'*.

INT: *'Rango'ntarātmā'*.

SWAMIJI: *'Rango'ntarātmā'*.[51] Then there is *'śarīraṁ haviḥ'*.[52] That has a different meaning. That means, a human being is made . . . he has four bodies. One is gross body. It is also called jāgrat śarīra, 'wakefulness in world'. Then there is subtle body, the one that is moving around in dreams (*svapna śarīra*). He moves here and there in dreams.

INT: Yes sir.

SWAMIJI: That is another body, that is the subtle body. Then there is subtlest body. That is called *kāraṇa* body (*śarīra*). In that body, one does not know about wakefulness or dream. This is called sound sleep, *suṣupti.* That body is called *suṣupti śarīra, suṣupti* body; that is the *kāraṇa* body. That is also a body. Then there is another body, *turya* body, *turya śarīra.* It pervades all the states, all bodies, when? In the centre. That means that when he is there in the gross body, then he goes to dreaming state. Between dreaming state and gross body,

51. The player (raṅga) is the internal soul (antātmā). Swami Lakshmanjoo, *Śiva Sūtra Vimarsiṇi.* 3.10.

52. The establishment of I consciousness on the body becomes an offering in the fire of God consciousness. Ibid., 2.8

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there is a gap – that is universal life. Between wakefulness and dreaming, and between dreaming and sleep, that is turya.

INT: You told earlier. That in childhood you had episodes of unconsciousness. You used to sink into it. Was it the turya state?

SWAMIJI: No, that was not turya state.

INT: So what was that?

SWAMIJI: No, I realise now what it was. If it had been turya state, I would have been able to express it, what was happening to me. [But] I was unable to express what was happening to me. I was only sinking in that great ocean.

INT: Now another thing is there. Listeners would want to know. Does Shaiva darśana say about these different customs and rituals? (39.25)

SWAMIJI: No Shaiva Darśaṇa has not recognized these.

INT: Rituals?

SWAMIJI: No, Shaivism does not recognize rituals.

INT: These karma kanda and others. I have another query. This thing of "nafs-kushi" has started.

SWAMIJI: What is "Nafs-kushi?"

INT: Nafs-kushi means, for example not having food, fasting for a long time, inflicting torture on one's body. For example there is some teaching of Lal Ded

SWAMIJI: No the teaching of Lal Ded, the teaching of old masters that is there. That is different. We will not understand it. Were they doing Nafs-kushi or were they doing something else. That was a course. They used to submit their bodies to that.

INT: This is not possible for everyone, people like us.

SWAMIJI: No it is not for us. Only they had that power. There were able to finish their bodies.

INT: Sir, do you have any thoughts on the Islamic philosophy.

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Is there any common point between this and that?

SWAMIJI: The meeting area is Sufism. That has many similarities.

INT: To what extent?

SWAMIJI: Hmm?

INT: To what extent?

SWAMIJI: Oneness, firstly there is oneness there. There is no Muslim and no Kashmiri pandit there.

INT: Sir, one thing is there. Muslim, Kashmiri Pandit, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh that is one thing. That difference. The other difference is between God and Man. Do you recognize that?

SWAMIJI: No, we do not recognize a difference between God and Man in the end. This is a difference.

INT: I will make a submission. Man, with respect to manliness, man will remain man only. He can't become God.

SWAMIJI: No this is the difference there. In this point there is some difference. The difference is that the man, you can consider a drop in the ocean. If we drop it in ocean, will you find it? It is gone!

INT: So I will make a submission. This I am doing to remove my personal doubts. Maybe many listeners also have the same. Sufis say the example that you give, put a drop in ocean and then you will not be able to find it, this is not the right example. Example is that in the night.

(41.20)

Stars are twinkling, but they are not seen in the day. They are not seen in the day because sun is there. It is the sun. It has tremendous light. It is so much dominating that stars are not seen.

SWAMIJI: No, individual cannot exist without universal. Basis of everything is universal only. So this example cannot be put there.

INT: Yes sir.

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INT: I have another request. In Shaiva Darśaṇa there are two or three branches. There is Spanda, there is Pratyabhijñā. Can you tell us something about these?

SWAMIJI: Yes, I will. It has been divided into four sections. Actually it is called Trika system. It means three fold. One is Śiva. The other is individual (Jīva or Nara). The third is the connecting rod between the two, which can pull Śiva down or the individual up (Śakti). Śiva has come down. This whole universe is the commentary of Lord Śiva. He shows. So this universal existence is more important than Śiva.

INT: Than Śiva?

SWAMIJI: Because it is the explained version.

(43.21)

This is the commentary. This world is the commentary of Śiva. So there is not difference between these.

INT: So this is a spiritual journey, and it has different steps?

SWAMIJI: No there are no steps. Sections are there, i.e., sections according to the capacity; whosoever is capable of what.

INT: You were talking about Spanda.

SWAMIJI: No, I am not talking about Spanda. This is all Trika. Three fold science. Śiva, Jīva and Śakti that is in between. Jīva is individual.

Now it is divided into four sections. One is Kula Darśaṇa, which is also known as Kaula Darśaṇa. Then there is Pratyabhijñā Darśaṇa. Then there is Krama Darśaṇa. Then there is Spanda Darśaṇa. There are the only, these four classes. Spanda Darśaṇa, Krama Darśaṇa, Pratyabhijñā Darśaṇa and Kaula Darśaṇa. Spanda Darśaṇa is concerned with Spanda, 'movement', i.e., movement without movement. For example this item is there, it is in movement. If it would not have been in movement, after one

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century it would become ashes.

INT: So it is travelling.

SWAMIJI: Yes. It is travelling. Travelling in movement. But this movement is without movement.

INT: We cannot see this.

SWAMIJI: So you have to concentrate on movement without movement.

(45.07)

For example breathing is there. There is incoming breath, and there is outgoing breath. Incoming breath is with movement, and outgoing breath is with movement. In between there is a point, between the incoming and outgoing breaths. That is called Spanda. That is Spanda. It is that which gives life to incoming and outgoing breath. For praying and practicing that, that is the Spanda school. The re-originator of Spanda system, I cannot say originator, the re-originator was Vasugupta. One who re-originated them. He studied only Spanda school, and taught this to his disciples and others. It is called Śiva Sutra.[53] Then Kallata has worked on this.[54] It has been explained. Spanda is the background. Background for everything, for all upāyas: śāmbhopāya, śāktopāya, āṇavopāya and anupāya.

INT: This is what is important for the listeners. These are steps. What is the ultimate goal of all of this, the ultimate destination?

SWAMIJI: See then there are other Darśaṇas. There is Krama Darśaṇa. It is another kingdom of Shaiva Darśaṇa... another kingdom.

INT: Is it another way or another kingdom?

SWAMIJI: No, another kingdom. Because the kingdom of

53. Vasugupta propagated the Śiva Sutras, and wrote a commentary called the Spanda Kārikā.

54. Kallata wrote various commentaries on Vasugupta's teachings.

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Spanda system leads to ultimate goal; it leads to the final goal. The goal is there. This is the complete goal, but it takes time. Spanda system will take time. Krama System will take lesser time. Krama system deals with kuṇḍalinī yoga.

INT: What sir?

SWAMIJI: Kuṇḍalinī.

INT: These days everyone is talking about kuṇḍalinī. We are hearing about it a lot. Can you please tell something on this?

SWAMIJI: I will tell you. This is [called] 'serpent power', but it is not actual serpent power. If breathing is coming in and out and he is practicing with this – the same thing what is talked about in Sufism – a time comes when there is one-pointedness. When there is one-pointedness his breath coagulates.

(48.27)

INT: It becomes a ball.

SWAMIJI: It becomes a ball. He is doing his practice and feels, "Maybe this is my death." But his master, his guru, has told him, "Don't worry at that point." So he does not worry. If he is an intelligent person, he will continue. If he is not so intelligent and does not understand this, he will come out and he has to start again. He does not touch it. Because this is sweet death, very sweet, very enticing kind of breath.(laughter)

So his breath comes down – *Shhhhhhhh.* Through the spinal cord. Then it touches the rectum. When it touches the rectum, then it starts immediately rising again. Then internally it moves up, in the formation of breath. Sweet breath. That breath is filled with bliss. That breath, not through nose. It is internally. It rises internally, at brahmasthana. It rises. Are you understanding it?

INT : Yes Sir

SWAMIJI: It comes down, touches rectum. At rectum he feels a

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wheel is moving. A chakra. Then it takes a kind of jump, rises higher. Internally. Internally, it goes up. Then one more wheel starts. In velocity, in velocity, it moves. Then one more wheels starts moving, while going up. While it goes, up , the earlier wheels also keep on moving. The yogi feels that. Like that it keeps on going up. This [process] is called veda dīkṣa.[55] Because of veda dīkṣā, it moves up. In Tantrāloka, Ācārya Abhinavagupta has said:

वेधदीक्षा च बहुधा तत्र तत्र निरूपिता ।
सा चाभ्यासवता कार्य्या येनोर्ध्वोर्ध्वप्रवेशतः ॥

vedhadīkṣā ca bahudhā tatra tatra nirūpitā |
sā cābhyāsavatā kāryā yenordhvordhvapraveśataḥ ||
śiṣyasya cakrasaṃbhedapratyayo jāyate dhruvaḥ ||

Tā. 29.237 ||[56]

vedhadīkṣā ca bahudhā, this is like piercing. The yogi who has traces of some desire for worldly fame, not in their manifested form. Not overt. If he has gross attachments, he will not reach there. It is only that he has this in the background, in traces, then he has this *cakra bhedana,*[57] it goes up. *Vedhadīkṣā ca bahudhā tatra tatra nirūpitā Sā cābhyāsavatā kāryā,* he gets the smell.

[Swamiji addressing the interviewer:] Sir, this is not ordinary, you have to give your life to this practice. You have to give your life. This is not keeping a pillow for you and reclining and relaxing. You

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55. The initiation of piercing.
56. And initiation by penetration is described by many methods and in various places. And it is to be celebrated by a person who is practised, so that through being absorbed into ever higher levels.
57. The piercing (bheda) of the wheels (cakras). This is indicated in the rise of Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī, where the yogi still has traces of worldly desires. See *Kashmir Shaivism - The Secret Supreme,* Ch. 18, "Variations in the Rise of Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī," pp125-128.

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have to finish yourself. You have to sit in the middle, six to seven hours, in the same posture and fight with the incoming and outcoming breath. And only then he will get something. Otherwise nothing. It is not a gift from your grandmother! It appears gross to state this.

There is a version of Gopi Krishna about Kuṇḍalinī yoga, but it appears imagination to me. It is not proper kundalini yoga.

(54.22)

INT: You are saying that it is some imagination and not experience.

SWAMIJI : Not experience. What I am telling you is on the basis of my...

INT: ...on basis of your experience.

SWAMIJI: Yes, on basis of my experience. The experience has not been complete. But I have [experienced] *tatastha jñāna.* That means, I have walked on the banks of this [ocean]. (laughter) On the banks of that experience.[58]

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58. "Whatever yogis perceive as the existence of God, they don't perceive the existence of God really. They perceive the existence of God from taṭastha. Taṭastha means from the shore. Just as you perceive the nature of ocean from its shore, you don't perceive the nature of the ocean exactly there, unless you dive in it totally. If you dive in it, still you won't perceive the nature of the ocean. You have to be all-pervading. If you pervade the whole ocean then you can understand the ocean. [But] how can you pervade the whole ocean? You will dive only in one point of the ocean. This is the position of God. God cannot be perceived by anybody. God is the perceiver of all, and nobody perceives him." Swami Lakshmanjoo, Tantrāloka 9, comm. of verse 159.
"Lord Śiva has explained that, śiva sakṣaṭnābhidyate, in real sense Śiva does not come in this drama." But it is only imitation of Śiva. You see Śiva, it is taṭastha jñāna of Śiva, i.e., from a distance. Śiva cannot be observed, he is the observer, he'll observe you, you can't observe him. This is the problem." Ibid., Tantrāloka 10, comm. of verse 102.

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yenordhvordhvapraveśataḥ śiṣyasya cakrasaṃbhedapratyayo jāyate dhruvaḥ

What is the fruit that one gets. *Yenāṇimādikā siddhiḥ. Śrīmālāyāṁ ca coditā.*[59] Another problem comes, if he has even more attachment [to worldly things] and less inclination towards practice, then what happens to him?

śrīmālāyāṃ ca coditā ūrdhvacakradaśā'lābhe piśācāveśa eva sā

When he is doing abhyāsa (practice) the breath comes down and it touches the mūlādhāra. Mūlādhāra remains unaffected. On the other hand, the topmost wheel[60] starts moving, then the throat wheel starts moving, then the heart wheel starts moving. It goes on, descending.

ऊर्ध्वचक्रगतावस्था यदाधः सम्भवन्ति च ।
तदा पैशाचः आवेशः स वै विघ्नस्य कारणम् ॥

ūrdhvacakragatāvasthā yadādhaḥ saṁbhavanti ca |
tadā paiśācaḥ āveśaḥ sa vai vignasya kāraṇam ||[61] *Ratnamālā śāstra*

Bheda cakra daśa,[62] *yadādhaḥ saṁbhavanti, bheda cakra daśa, yadādhaḥ saṁbhavanti,* that states that are there in this, one keeps going down only, he will not come up from below, he will come

59. "What fruit occurs from the downward movement [of kuṇḍalinī]?" Tantrāloka 29.238bc.
60. The point between the eyebrows, i.e., bhrumadhya cakra.
61. " . . . when these states are penetrated downward from above and in reverse, that is incorrect absorption (piśācāveśa). That is the indication that hereafter this yogī's life will be filled with obstacles." Swami Lakshmanjoo, Self Realization in Kashmir Shaivism, *"Kuṇḍalinī Vijñāna Rahasya – The secret Knowledge of Kuṇḍalinī,* ch. 5, pp108-109.
62. The cycle (cakra) of differentiation (bheda).

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down from below. Tadā paiśācaḥ āveśaḥ. He attains paiśāca state, then he does not have the possibility, of getting elevated further. Then he has to work very hard, very much struggle and then he can go up again.

There is another system which is

INT: Pratyabhijñā

SWAMIJI: Pratyabhijñā means recognition. For example, when I have the experience of lord, that glory, when I feel that in the heart. Then one does not feel that it has come from somewhere else.

INT: Okay Sir.

SWAMIJI: He feels that it was there only. This is recognition.

(57.28)

"Swātmavabhāso hi na ananabhuta pūrvam"

It was there already but I did not understand that. For this our Ācārya Utpaladeva ji has given an example. If he is there at a holy place, a pilgrimage. There are people from the boy's side, there are people from the girl's side. They have already tied up between them, but the boy has not seen the girl.[63] But don't we meet sometimes by coincidence. For example at Tulamula (Kheer Bhavani). Both are sitting side by side but do not know that we have been tied up with this family. The girl gets tea in samovar and pours tea for the boy. Does the boy have any sensation? Does the boy have any feeling? Here comes Pratyabhijñā darshan. Pratyabhijñā darshan does this that, if the guru tells him, what you wanted to see is this only. This is Pratyabhijñā Darśaṇa, (spontaneous recognition).

63. In Kashmir, till about 1950 AD, the girl and the boy (prospective bride and groom) did not meet each other before their marriage got fixed. The marriage was decided by a meeting of the two families. The boy and the girl would typically not participate in this meeting. As such, the boy and the girl would not have seen each other before marriage. (*Editor's note*)

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And there are upāyas. One is śāmbhopāya, then is śāktopāya, then is āṇavopāya. Śāmbhopāya is when you un-mind your mind without any support. Like in the beginning we [need] support, to stop our mind, we take support. Like we place a photograph in front of us. If we are more advanced than this, then what do we do. We take the support of breath. But actually we do not see the breath, we have to see where from this is emerging and going – that source, we have to see. So like this. This is āṇavopāya. Śāktopāya is another. When your capacity is more . . . when his capacity is more, the guru pushes him to take on śāktopāya.

What is śāktopāya?

For example, we see; we all see. We see with our eyes, but no, we have to see who is seeing this. This is more refined way. This is śāktopāya. For this, the seeding is done by Pratyabhijñā Darśaṇa. Feeding śāktopāya as well as śāmbhavopāya. Then there is no "seeing" and no not seeing. Then śambhavopāya is there. This is the one that deals with Kaula Darśaṇa. Kaula darshana a means to understand and realise totality. If you see the smallest thing, one blade of grass, it is filled with 118 worlds. All the 118 worlds exist in this. For example, an individual is there. In that individual, Shaivism has explained this, this body of a human being, it is filled with the entire universe.

INT: Now this consciousness is there, what is the destination, what is the goal?

SWAMIJI: I have not reached there. (Laughter) But I have taṭastha jñāna. Taṭastha jñāna means, treading on the banks. The real goal is to have "Cidānandalābhaḥ"[64] Cidānandalābhaḥ does not happen till breathing in and out is going on. But till breathing is going, there is

64. "When the bliss (ānanda) of cit is attained (lābha), there is stability of the consciousness of identity with cit even while the body etc. are being experienced. This state is jivanmukti (i.e. mukti even while one is alive). Jaideva Singh, Kṣemarāja's Pratyabhijñā Hṛdayam, verse 16.

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individuality. Till the time individuality is going on, there is no hope. Individuality has to go and then one can get hold of universal consciousness. Those who are true seekers, those who are truly on the path of Self Realization, those who do not have any attachment for the world, they want to get finished off in the greatness of that consciousness. For them, this sadchakrabhedan is not there. When the breath comes down and touches the bottom (mūlādhāra cakra), then it rises at once, and they attain God consciousness, spiritual bliss, cidānanda lābha.[65] The state of cidānanda lābha is attained by them. He feels everything is finished. What happens afterwards? Afterwards, as you know there is no breath. Then this state does not only recognise samādhi, but also vyuthāna, i.e., also in the external world. That means it finds existence of Lord Shiva in vyuthāna as well. This is automatic force. This happens automatically. (birds chirping loudly). This outside world.

Because world is not there, what is the world made of? Of that (consciousness) only. So consciousness has to be realized there also. So this automatic course happens for this yogi. When cidānanda lābha happens. Then what happens?

This state rises in one second. This blissful state. From bottom to top. From bottom to top but filled with ecstasy. But in one second only. What happens in the next second?

(1.04.12)

Then breath releases slowly. It does not go inside. From here (Swamiji points to some area) it comes out. Automatically his eyes open a bit. Automatically! But he cannot talk with anyone. All that in front of him, his room, all the items kept there, all that appears filled with God consciousness. And then he experiences this again . But

65. This is nominated as the rise of cit kuṇḍalinī. See: *Kashmir Shaivism – The Secret Supreme*, chpt. 17, pp. 118-120.

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this remains for a second. What happens after that? After one second, he goes back into the previous state, the real samādhi state, for one second. Then again the next second , breath releases, eyes open and he sees blissful state in outside world again. So again and again this happens. Ācārya Abhinavagupta has given this state the name of "Krama mudra". So this state is above the state of Cidānanda and it is called Jagadānanda. But Ācārya Abhinavagupta has explained that he cannot remain in this Jagadānanda state for more than fifteen minutes. If he remains more than fifteen minutes, then he has to leave this body. This state will not recognise bodily existence.

INT: There are a lot of people, who do miracles, is there any role of miracles in this. Are there miracles? Is there any role?

SWAMIJI: [In the] lower state!

INT: Is it not that many people do it?

SWAMIJI: Yes, in the lower state some do it. In the higher state there is no role [to play]. Those who do it are in the lower state.

INT: Yes Sir.. About Lal Ded. Can you tell something about her for the listeners?

SWAMIJI: Yes, she was . . . she was doing Laya Yoga – Lal Ded. She was also an elevated soul and she showed Laya Yoga once to her master as well.

INT: Have you read the vāks of Lal Ded.

SWAMIJI: Yes, a bit.

INT: Can you please tell us one or two; those which are connected to Kashmir Shaivism.

SWAMIJI: One, I shall recite one:

Kehn chi nyendra hati vudi
Kenchan vudyan nasyar paye
Kehn chi snan karith upvati
Kehn chi grahasth bazith agrahastha

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Kehn chi nyendra hati vudi, some are sleeping but internally are wide awake,

Kenchan vudyan nasyar paye, they are doing some practice but are sleeping actually

Kehn chi snan karith upvati, upvati means impure, (some are impure even after taking a bath)

Kehn chi grahasth bazith agrahastha, some are householders and still have renounced everything.

So like this, she was also at a very elevated state.

INT: Sir, listeners would also like to know, you are teaching and practicing Shaivism. But are you doing something else, in ashram, gardening or something else. Any other activity to refresh yourself.

SWAMIJI: Yes, I do teach my disciples. Every Sunday I have a class and I teach them. But no one understands fully.

INT: Laughter.

SWAMIJI: But they do have some improvement; some small increments of improvement. But full transformation has not happened.

INT: So Sir, has the environment been created.

SWAMIJI: Yes, many are coming up. I cannot nominate them as of now.

INT: Yes Sir.

SWAMIJI: But they have a long way to go.

INT: So by this you have the faith that Shaivism will keep on going. In the future

(1.09.03)

SWAMIJI: Yes, I fully believe this. I believe that Lord Śiva will himself move this and keep it going. If I do not keep it going, he will come himself and do it.

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INT: Swamiji you have done work on Gita Samgraha of Ācārya Abhinavagupta. Śaṅkara's bhāṣya (commentary) on the Bhagavad-Gītā is also there.[66] So what is different in this? Can you tell us what is different in this that is not there in other texts.

SWAMIJI: This Gita Samgraha of Ācārya Abhinavagupta is totally unique.

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन

trai-guṇya-viṣhayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna[67]

Trai-guṇya-viṣhayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna . Trai-guṇya-viṣhayā, all the commentators, including Shankarācārya, they have said that all vedas are with three gunas. *trai-guṇya-viṣhayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna.* So Arjuna, you leave all three. So that means you leave vedas as well. Abhinavagupta has not said that. *trai-guṇya-viṣhayā. Traigunyatmakena karmena Vishaya vedat, simranti bandhanti.* When we adjust the three gunas to veda, then they bind. You leave the three gunas and you hold the vedas. Do not leave vedas. So things like that are there in Gita Samgraha of Ācārya Abhinavagupta.

ALL INTERVIEWERS: Thank you Swamiji for clarifying our doubts and enlightening our listeners.

|| JAI GURUDEV ||

Note: Audio files of the original interviews are available with Ishwar Ashram Trust. Please see our website www.ishwarashramtrust.com.

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66. Adi Shankarācārya (c. 8th century CE) was the founder of the Advaita Vedānta school. He wrote extensive commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sūtras, and the Bhagavad-Gītā, explaining the non-dual (Advaita) philosophy. (*Editor's note*)
67. *trai-guṇya-viṣhayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna*
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho niryoga-kṣhema ātmavān B.G. 2.45

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Publications

(ENGLISH)

1. Kashmir Shaivism -The Secret Supreme
2. Lectures on Principle and Discipline in Kashmir Shaivism
3. Shiv Sutras
4. Vijnana Bhairva - Manual on Self Realization(Indian Edition)
5. Bhagvad Gita in the Light of Kashmir Shaivism
6. Festival of Devotion & Praise -Shivastotravali by Utpaldeva
7. Abhniavaguptas Parmarthasara
8. Kundalani Vijnana Rahaysam
9. Mystery of Vibrationless Vibration in Kashmir Shaivism -Vasuguptas Spanda Karika and Kshemarajs Spanda Sandoha
10. Light on Tantra in Kashmir Shaivism - Abhinavaguptas Tatraloka (Chapter I)
11. Light on Tantra in Kashmir Shaivism - Abhinavaguptas Tatraloka (Chapter 2 & 3)
12. Light on Tantra in Kashmir Shaivism - Abhinavaguptas Tatraloka (Chapter 4)
13. Magical Jewel of Devotion - Stavchintamani
14. Shaivacharya Swami Lakshmanjoo- A Brief Life Sketch
15. BADI BOD (Short Stories for Children)
16. Parapreveshika
17. Vatulnathsutra
18. The Eight Limbs of Yoga
19. The Wisdom of Kashmir Shaivism (85 verses)

(HINDI/SANSKRIT)

1. Sri Gurustuti (New Edition)
2. Sri Samb Panchshika
3. Shivastotravali
4. Trik Shastra Rahasya Prakriya (manuscript with Hindi transalation)
5. Panchastavi with Hindi transalation(soft Bound)
6. SriKramanyapradipika
7. Tantraloka (First Ahnika) manuscript with Hindi transalation
8. Stuti Chandrika
9. Snan Sandyopasana Vidhi with Gurugita manuscript in Sanskrit
10. Kshmerajas Pratyabhijnahrdayam
11. Ganeshtavraj

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In Digital Media

(HINDI)

1. Radio Interview on aspects of Kashmir Shaivism & Kundalini Revealations (Hindi)

(KASHMIRI)

1. Sri Tantraloka (194 Audio Lectures)
2. Sri Utpaldevas Shivastotravali (Selected Verses)
3. Yams and Niyams in Kashmir Shaivism
4. Radio Interview on Aspects of Kashmir Shaivism
5. Golden Lecture Series - I Meditation
6. Golden Lecture Series -2 Panchastavi & Selected Discourses at Haridwar
7. Golden Lecture Series -3 Amriteshwar Bhairav Mantra, Gurugita & 4 Schools of Thought in Kashmir Shaivism
8. Stutikusumanjali Selected Verses
9. Maharthmajari Selected Verses
10. Paratrmishika Selected Verses
11. Shiv Sutras
12. Shirmad Bhagavagita
13. Iswar Pratibhijnana Vimarshini - Selected Verses

(SANSKRIT)

1 Sri Gurustuti and other Verses

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SHAIVACHARYA SWAMI LAKSHMANJOO

Shaivacharya Swami Lakshmanjoo (1907–1991) was a great Kashmiri Shaiva master and scholar who lived in the 20th century. He was a highly realized spiritual teacher who dedicated his life to the study, practice, and dissemination of the teachings of Kashmir Shaivism, one of the major schools of Hindu philosophy.

Swami Lakshmanjoo was born in Srinagar, Kashmir, and was initiated into the lineage of Kashmir Shaivism at a young age. He received his spiritual education and training from several renowned masters, including Swami Mahtab Kak, who was his primary teacher.

Swami Lakshmanjoo was a prolific writer and commentator on the Kashmir Shaiva texts, and his works include over 20 books and numerous audio and video recordings of his discourses. He is widely recognized as one of the greatest exponents of Kashmir Shaivism in modern times, and his teachings continue to inspire countless students and seekers of truth around the world.

In the scholarly world, Swami Lakshmanjoo's legacy continues through the institutions he founded, including the Ishwar Ashram Trust, Kashmir Shaiva Institute, Lakshmanjoo Academy and the Universal Shaiva Fellowship, all of which are dedicated to preserving and disseminating the teachings of Kashmir Shaivism.

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